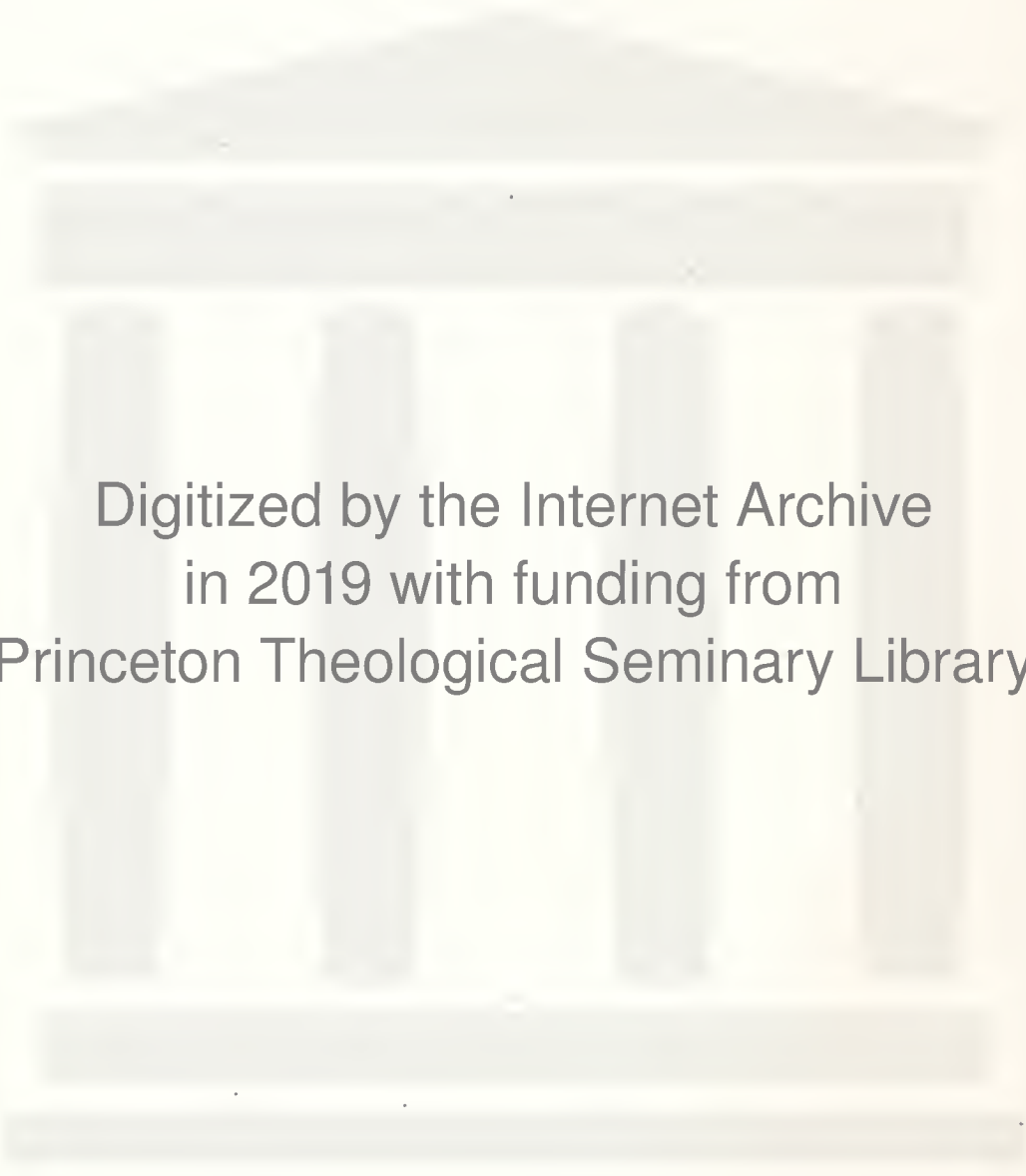




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SENT FORTH

✓
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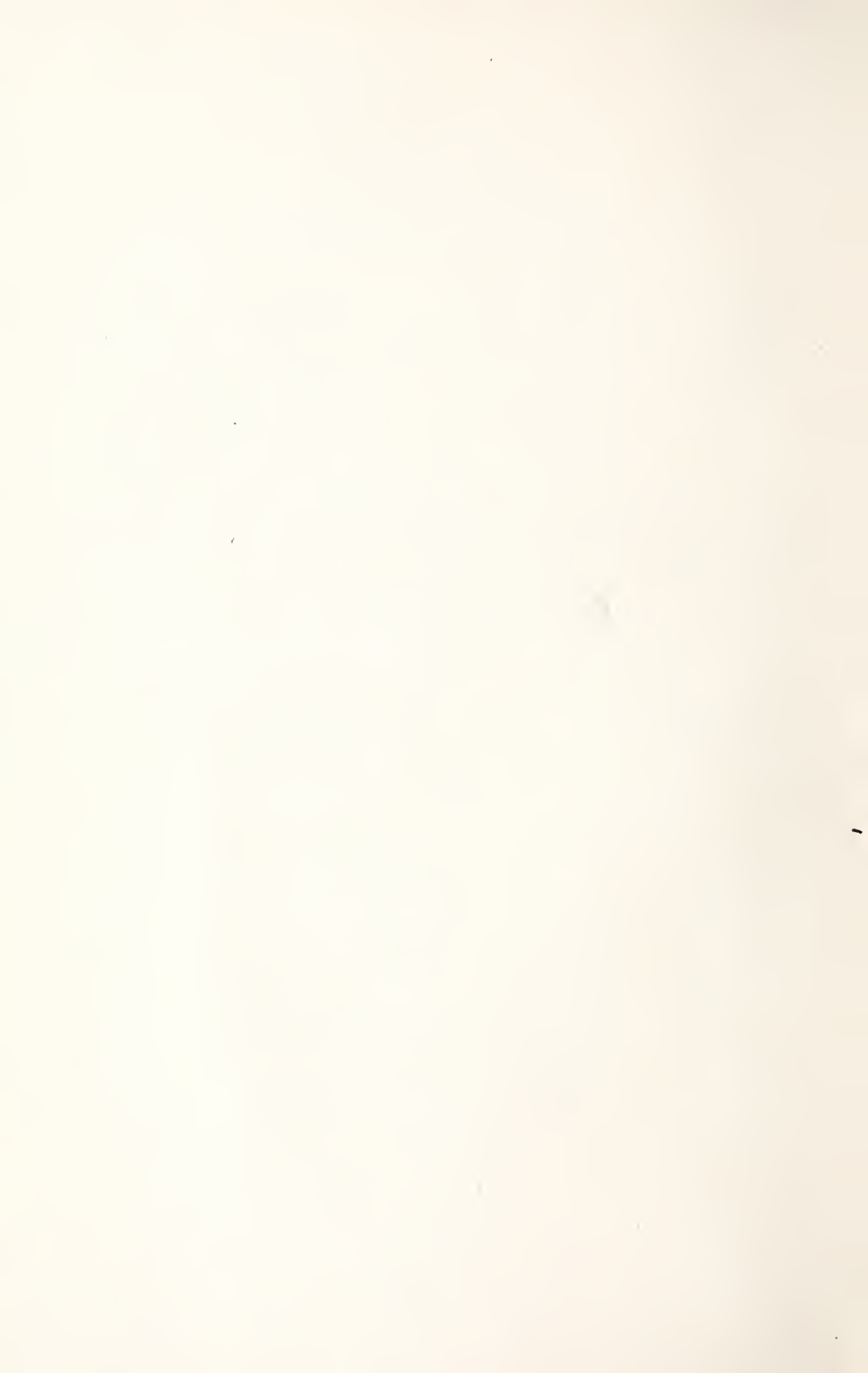
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TO WIFE AND CHILDREN

*“Away with weary cares and themes,
Swing wide the moonlit gate of dreams.”*

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INTRODUCTION

To persuade men to be reconciled to God, to illumine the levels of the nobler life, to "allure to brighter worlds and lead the way," must always be the grandest mission possible to men. Any real contribution to the literature that aims at a true appraisal of this work, preparation for it, and success in it will therefore be welcomed by all right-thinking persons.

Such a contribution, I venture to say, will be found in this volume.

I began its perusal in anticipation of something at once original and valuable, and have read on with growing interest from "At the Bars" to "Over the Border."

The purist in style and language may sometimes pause over some colloquial phrase or quaint expression. The reader may here and there feel that these cryptic sentences seem to lack close relation, but a little thought is sure to supply the link. Doctor Tilroe's style is his own and does not fail to hold the eager interest of either auditor or reader.

Of most importance, however, is what the author of *SENT FORTH* offers us in elucidation of his theme.

By implication he ridicules the small souls of those men of the cloth who, posing as moderns, smile patronizingly on "theology" as they might on astrology, and seem to class them together. Our author recognizes all fields of quest as included in the old Chautauqua motto, "The Word and the Works of God." It is at once characteristic and refreshing to read, under "The Personal Equation," "The preacher who is not a theologian should be ashamed to accept a salary."

A broad view is here taken of essentials in the character and equipment of a preacher which may well be pondered by preachers young and old. The study of the great Model, beginning with "Jesus the Preacher," is both challenge and inspiration. The balance of the educational and the persuasive in the pulpit is finely held. With insistence on the "Cultural" Tilroe says, "When we hear it said that modern preachers cannot exhort, it means that they cannot preach." The evangelist whose constant plea is "Accept Christ" should study carefully the paragraphs on "The Regnant Christ."

Rich in homiletical suggestion are the chapter on "The Thrills of the Bible" and the letter to the "Seven Churches." A true evangelism is here shown in a glory that needs no scaffolding of gymnastics or vulgar stories. As one

reads he thinks of Spurgeon, Joseph Parker, and Jowett, of Beecher, and Brooks, and Simpson, and prays that the church may never lack such gospel heralds, gloriously equipped and sent of God.

EZRA A. HEALY.

Dean Emeritus, Maclay School of Religion,
University of Southern California.

ALL DAY WITH GOD

One word with Thee is conquest,
One touch of Thee is calm,
The radiance of Thy presence
Makes all my day a psalm.

To hear Thee in the morning
Say, "Welcome to this day,"
Makes all my deeds of service
A happy holiday.

To hear Thee in the noontide
Say, "Break thou bread with Me,"
Doth change my daily hunger
To sacrament with Thee.

To hear Thy voice at evening
Say, "Tired child, take rest,"
Is better than the moonlight,
Or gentle mother breast.

Thus, every day is comfort,
When spent, my Lord, with Thee,
And every step is onward,
And all's all well with me.

—*William A. Quayle.*

AT THE BARS

THERE is some excuse for this book. Apprentice of the manse, an ancient pilgrim, a teacher for a season, one might not well make tryst with the setting sun and leave no sign. He owes too much to a world that has been kind to him. To pay one's debts is virtue if it were not wisdom.

And the time needs all its friends. The old earth has quite too little of its treasure left. The thieves are in the cage, but the loot is gone. The world is in a mood to get. He who would give gives twice.

Besides, with whom is sharing of one's own more fitting than with him who earns only that he may give? The dozen men and women who could keep their one brave heart in khaki cheerful at his task are forever to be envied. Their company is honor.

This man sent forth, the man of a mission, who is not his own, has not been therefore simply a tool, a bridge to cross, a handle to real affairs. He has been himself a real affair. Men do not write history and overlook the prophet, the priest, the minister, preacher, apostle,

pastor. The hours and paths are few that have not known him. That he is one of many names is but a minor note of his high place. Rabbi, dominie, clergyman, ecclesiastic, rector, father, bishop, elder, deacon, licentiate, theologian, chaplain, man of God, is added suggestion: neither list nor catalogue. In some guise, from the earliest days, among all peoples, in every land, the holy man has had his room and rank and rule. Whether leader of men, or gladly, proudly servant of men, he has forever found standing as a man among men. He was the inescapable. There was magic with him.

Sometimes it was the witchery of words. He was the original "tongue of silver." Again it was the lure of tradition, the spell of the trail. Commonly the beauty of holiness, the regnancy of plain goodness, worked its will. Often it was his kindly ministry in sorrow. By the record, signs and wonders were not rarely in his hand. Seldom enough was he a fool, and usually he was held the wise man of the parish. He wrote books, guided the annals of his times, founded libraries, was good counsel to all comers. Princes and kings named him friend. The altar, the desk, sowing and harvest, grief and joy, the cradle and the grave, were lonely in his going. With the old man of the tribe the holy man was one to be reckoned with, to be

set apart from his kind, to be held in honor, in the seats of the mighty to sit at home. From ancient days, for good or ill as one might deem, the minister has been a man of worth and note. There was good great reason for him. He did not happen.

The layman will not largely see these pages. To know his minister well has been to get under his load, and he has one of his own. Then, too, he thinks it is a family matter, and he has good manners. The kindly friend who could not forget his pastor of another day does not count. He would lend him money, not to say time and patience. As to a sort at least, the layman does not read books. He is licentiate of the morning paper, and ridden of the rush. Reading books means leisure. That homiletics is a new process in supply and demand he is not sure. The preacher man is another story. There is truly no fraternity on earth like the brotherhood of the ministry. We chat an hour ere we sleep.

To be more serious, one's deeper convictions are the heritage of his kind. He would never know how far they stray did he not tell his fellow. Till what is true comes by, the world forever waits. The price of one preacher may be the cost of another.

It has been suggested that these pages might be of interest in the classroom. They are the

sowing and harvest of the classroom. During eight school years not a few great-hearted fellows, coming to place in the ministry, have considered these sayings among many and will greet them again as none others may. General literature needs only a guiding hand to have a textbook value of the largest worth. What one may do with his own is, of course, quite another affair. How far one's voice shall carry is forever of the tentative. The prime concern is that at its reach it shall be of use.

W. E. T.

CHAPTER I

PERSPECTIVE

A ROD quite straight in air or water, in air and water, will bend. A railway train is large or small as near or far. We know better; we cannot see better. The rod has not changed; the train is the same. How they appear is a different matter. That is the world of perspective. An artist will put wide leagues on an inch square. He is master of perspective. Perspective has to do with things as they look. As diagnosis is knowing through, perspective is seeing through. What is the minister in perspective? Of what manner of men? As a minister?

Of course, the minister is one with a mission. His credentials are not his own. He is sent. He is one with a commanding mission. He is sent of God. "How shall they hear without a preacher?" is the logic of the skies. Even the Eternal Father could not content himself except in sending forth his Son to preach. "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent." Whether popularly so or not, preaching is of an autocracy, the

autocracy of God. As a minister's credentials are not his own, so neither are they of the neighbors. As to him, all ordination, all ecclesiastical polity, is second hand. Whether patriarch, prophet, priest, bishop, evangelist, or of any name, he is a man sent from God. The King of kings has haled him forth. He is forever an ambassador.

Then there is no minister except as there is a man. If so be he is a woman, she must be "the eternal feminine." By so much as she or he is conventional, the preacher is a failure. The elemental human is a primary matter in this business. If his health, his mental outlook, his social connections, his business affairs, his family ties are in anything abnormal, his wings are lead. The usual minister is far too much an appendage of the church. The church did not build him; he built the church. The preacher must be a man among men. Jesus of Nazareth was much of an ordinary Jew. The minister must be plain man.

The normal minister has his family about him. He is to be helpful to men and women and children, young folks and old people, brothers, sisters, wives and sweethearts, mothers, fathers, husbands—every kind of humanity—and will need to say the less the more he is. The good son, husband, and father, brother and uncle, is

half way through his sermon at the first hymn. The monastery can never take the place of the manse. The home is a high pulpit.

The preacher is an executive. He is an official of the church. He has a representative character. He is himself and more. What he might accommodate as a man he must often refuse as not his own. In free America this note of the minister is largely lost. We are not heard as ambassadors. Our sermons are opinions. God speaks his will in a world of order, in an organized family, in differentiated races, in tribes and nations, in congenialities and cults, in a mighty world of books, in his immortal church, in shapes and forms, in system and organism everywhere. The minister is an apostle of the organic. He is sent not alone to speak but also to build. The work of his hands may abide when speech is silence.

The minister is a cultural force. God became incarnate that men might know. So the preacher must be a rabbi. He is bound to be as far beyond his parish as he can get. He is to be as far above as he can fly. He is to dig till his spade falls through. The very wealth of culture among his people is his call to be their master. They have not half the opportunity to command him that he has to rule them, and to fail is folly. The churches are not wiser in

counseling their ministers to pray and to be holy, than at insisting they must know. The whole round world is a school, and will not be led of the scholars. With a minister culture is not an elective. It is a major. It is never a choice. It is of the day's work.

The preacher is a citizen. As a specialist in culture he is an architect of public opinion. He is not so much to follow as to lead. In a democracy where the people rule, the leaders are a vital affair. Somebody must find the front, and if the moral captains do not, another sort will. All times of crisis bring the clergymen to the fore, and they uniformly acquit themselves well. Any distaste for politics, economics, social welfare, should be early discounted. No man can be indifferent to the roof over his head. The call of one's country or community is the call of God.

The preacher is a social factor. He is a good neighbor. If tempted to counsel overmuch with his books, he should remember that the lives of men are libraries. Men are the cradles of books. Folks are the original sources. The soil, the mine, the sea, are no more primary to economics than people to the preacher. To be away from them far, or long, is to lose them. One must be with his parish to be of it. To feel as if he were coming down, or back, or in,

or from, somewhere, is to know that he has been away too far. It is the honor of God that he tabernacles with men. The Grecian deities over fond of Olympus are no more.

The preacher is a pastor. His social life may be his choice. His pastorate is of his duties. His shoes are his pulpit. If to like it is not natural, he is to learn. While going because he should he is an excuse and takes the room of a better man. His Master went about doing good, and if straining to be like him, he should say his prayers. He is comfort to the heavy-hearted, warning to the careless, guide to the wandering, strength to the weak, and companion to him appointed to die. Brother, friend, and fellow traveler with his kind he is at the King's business. The Shepherd of Souls is of God's nobility.

The preacher is an evangelist. He fishes for men. He catches men. If God did not mistake himself in calling him to the brookside, he will surely have weight in his creel. It is of his commission. The physician whose patients all die, the farmer who must buy for his own table, the aviator who cannot keep off the ground should awaken no more suspicion than the preacher who only preaches. The whole crowd are doubtful characters.

The preacher is, finally, a man of convictions.

Should the modern wisdom of the wise come to fruition in the abolishing of denominations, it would only be a breathing spell till cults and societies within the great Sahara would spring to life and wide utility. Jesuitism was unrest with Romanism. Methodism could not quiet itself within the State Church of England. The dozen forms of Methodism are not shapes of death, but incarnations of an abundant life. The tides of local churches are signs that all is not dead. True ministers are thinkers of their own thoughts. They have no ambition to crystallize.

A man called of God to be a minister, a teacher, an executive, a social force, a good citizen, an evangelist, a pastor, a friend and helper of all men, cannot be standardized and delivered overnight. Time is of his making as surely as his curriculum. It is a great world and a great work the minister is upon, and only a great readiness is at all fitting. He is to learn how to store his mind, and then how to use it. He is to find how preaching and teaching get on together. He is to consider when to enter his study and when to leave it. The varieties in ministers are to startle him. The ease and artistry with which good men blunder and waste their way through life will amaze him. The impossible prophet he has dreamed of being,

and that only his brother can be, will discourage him. How men do their stumbling over little things—awkwardness, prejudices, narrow outlook, careless dressing, choice in reading and company, emphasis on the indifferent—will amuse him and break his heart. How the very wisest missionary is needed for the denser ignorance and depravity; that many heathen wear purple and fine linen; how entirely stupid a saint can be; that the utterly foreign field is the heart of a great city; that the spit is often turned of angels, and fingers are thumbs in this old earth, will give him an idea preaching is much of a business.

A really worth-while minister gets his second and hundredth call to preach while wisely about his work. The brother who lost his religion in the seminary was a long step toward being really a preacher. The whirlwind is a full year in any decent theological course. The failure of thousands who occupy but never fill a pulpit, is simply that they were rarely deep enough in their business to have doubts. No man preaches well who has not been twin to tragedy. The slain Egyptian of Moses, the deep waters of Jonah, the heart-breaks of David, the thorn in the flesh of Paul, the cross of Jesus, did not happen. A minister dies of the commonplace. The tragedy of life is living. The preacher

whose parish is ease is hardly even an incumbent. He is more probably an encumbrance. The theological student, sorry his course is done and wishing his three years seven, is the minister with his best ahead. A world in flood with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea, spells a sort of preaching yet to be. We speak of perspective. We are wise men who see through.

BLUE MONDAY

By so much as he or she is conventional, the preacher is a failure.

The monastery can never take the room of the manse.

With the minister, culture is not an elective.

The whirlwind is a full year in any decent theological course.

....

No man can be indifferent to the roof over his head.

Time is of the making of the minister as surely as his curriculum.

The ease and artistry with which good men blunder and waste their way through life, are of the wonders of the world.

....

No man preaches well who has not been twin to tragedy.

The soul of the world is the world of the soul.

The cross is kindness. God is never contented with what may be relieved.

....

The miracle of religion is the clinic of the Bible.

The pulpit, and Sunday school, and family altar, are resurrection of the dead.

CHAPTER II

THE PERSONAL EQUATION

It was a saying of Moses, mighty among his kind, that men have wings. "The days of our years are threescore years and ten, and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow, for it is soon cut off, and we fly away." And we plod as having but feet and hands. What would life be did we but know ourselves? A dozen better men were of our cradle. A request of a certain chair in a Western university is that each man entering the class shall furnish an autobiography. What he is then is of purpose to what he is to be. Second only to the unveiling of God is the discovery of man.

As we have seen, the preacher is an official, a social force, an apostle of culture, a citizen, a neighbor, and things yet other. He is likely to be lost in his clothes. That ministers are colorless is not seldom of their defeat. They should flee the commonplace as criminal. The lighthouse on a rockbound coast is given an interval and intensity, a character of its own. Great fleets, and lives of men, are at its private

call. So no minister should hide his light under any bushel. An immortal soul might strand and die. The world and the kingdom of God have rights in head, and heart, and hand, and all of every minister.

Many American ministers are men of cosmopolitan parentage and training. It may mean much. To have English, Scotch, German, French, Scandinavian, Latin, or Holland blood in one's veins does not hurt him. To have missionaries in the family, to have been a doughboy, to have seen the world in any eyes, to have been what a versatile bishop calls "a child of the manse," to have lost one's self to his own dooryard in any fashion, is an arrow at the ordinary. Such influences lead straight to a planetary vision. John Wesley did not monopolize the world as a parish. A wide traveler speaks often of the "township mind." He does not dwell upon it as an acquisition. Our habitat is a big one. It should grow big men.

A democratic cradle is an asset. If one has missed it, it is a matter to get. The Good Book calls the great crowd, the masses, "the common people." The uncommon people would hardly make a congregation. One of the great givers of America was found by his pastor kneeling at the altar of the church he had grandly helped to build.

“Why are you here?” asked the kindly shepherd, later Bishop McIntyre.

“For my own soul’s good,” was the ready answer.

The personal equation was more than wealth. Pastor and layman are now within the veil where gold is dust. To find one’s self caring overmuch for place or fame or possessions is a matter to be gotten over.

“It is the way the Master went,
Should not the servant tread it still?”

One thing need never be forgotten—the kindly spirit of one’s father’s house. How few the thorns among the roses! As out in the great world we find people hard to please, ready to suspect, fires in their eyes, a clinch in their fingers, we may be glad it was not so at home. It does not happen that religion is a gospel. The earth is weary for glad tidings. The true preacher is a welcome body. Nor is kindness a garment. It is a tang of the blood. If children and dogs do not love us, it is well to consider.

As no one should need telling, pretense or affectation is folly and waste. If one has little of what the world thinks wealth, he should enjoy it. There is no device of the devil to make the sun go down at noon like sham or jealousy or envy. The first syllable of being is to be. We

rarely fool the neighbors. Why try it? If that pride is folly sinks deeper than that pride is sin, let the drill drive down. The good time and strength wasted among men at appearing would double the sweetness and the worth of living. The sun pays scant attention to its reputation. It is the sun. Daylight is. The thing we are might walk alone.

The standardizing of duty is a lesson to learn early. If a thing is right, the battle should be over. Some rumble and echo here and there might linger, but the lightning should be faded. In every minister's life there are stale hours, waste places, the valley and the shadow. He will not always enjoy religion. He will need to learn over and over again that religion means in its primer "to bind." If he finds this out in the morning, it will be several hours longer until night. The outstanding sermon of the Great War is the Day of Judgment. To set right in the earth so that it will bear fruit is worth all the pain and tears. Justice is the habitation of God's throne. As anthracite, dull and disfiguring not rarely, yet light and heat and power are in its keeping.

Possibly the planetary, the democratic, the kindly, and the true are all at bloom in our lives with yet more besides. Or we may have been reared more tenderly than others, and be

something of a sensitive plant. And human life is not yet a conservatory. So our task is not a little to unlearn. The world is a thing of the open air. It is rarely under roof. There will be wind in our curls. In the Civil War and the great World War, to the surprise of all concerned, the supposedly pampered youth of the cities made wonderful soldiers. The heroes of the Argonne were largely a town-bred crowd. It is not ruin, always, to unlearn.

Some of us may have been so unfortunate as never to have been poor. There was always meal in our barrel. Peter of Russia was Peter the Great, that as a common sailor he toiled in the Holland dockyards, drudging for his people. The world is not sure about socialism, but when a millionaire forgets his gold in men, women, and children, it has its hand to its ear. The array of dollar-a-year men in all lands of earth has taken vast tarnish from its treasures. It is not money, but the love of money, that is the root of evils.

Possibly too school advantages may not have been of the best. One so gets years ahead of his neighbor. The poor fellow can never catch up. His golden spoon was failure. For opportunity there is no resurrection of the dead. But if he does not manage to forget his better chances, his neighbor's crown may be of diamonds when

his own is tin. How to learn and not to advertise is an art. The weakness of one's strength may be unsuspected, as the rose on the consumptive's cheek is herald of the tomb. It was a well-remembered saying of Miner Raymond, the white-haired prophet of the Evanston campus, that "No man knows till he knows that he knows." To greatly excel is to be greatly tempted. It is always sad when an Eden is lost in memory of a fall. One has not been at school while his schooling shows.

Who said anything about awkwardness and the slovenly? The neighbors did. Those who had no choice but to meet him, see him, hear him preach, live with him till moving time. No, his coat never fitted, his trousers were too short, his cuffs and the laundry were not over friendly, his hands were paws, his feet were useful mainly in reaching the ground, and his hair was a jungle, but that was too personal, to mention. It was the nondescript that got into his mind. He could hardly read his text without some sort of a blunder, and a hymn was an early aeroplaning over the Atlantic. He gave no sign that there had been anything new found out about the Bible in a generation. He bandied personalities and barnyard rhetoric, as if men and women were built of wood. He said so many things that occurred to him. He went

into the pulpit with a slouch. He preached too long as with little to say. His illustrations had been standardized. They were from books. Men remembered rather than listened. The church was a hall of echoes. Then he wondered that being a good man, and orthodox, and having a nice family, he moved so often. He suspected the episcopacy. His churches were hard to serve. It did not occur to him that the personal equation had him, and was holding him fast.

“Whatever you do, don’t send us a little fellow.” “He is all right, but things are not well with her.” “We know him too well.” “He undoes his pulpit in the parish.” “He turns on the waterworks.” “He is careless about his debts.” And all the time the good man never dreamed that the personal equation was on the job.

A commendably popular pastor once said, “My people will do anything for me but be good.” It was in one sentence a pleasing and pitiful thing. The personal equation works for a man and against him. It is the business of the minister to be as attractive as he can make himself. The whitest soul that ever lived is said to have drawn men unto him. With Omnipotence in his fingers, the great God leads. The Mighty shepherds men. Power to entice is the super-

lative dynamic. John the Baptist in raiment of camel's hair with leathern girdle about his loins, and eating locusts and wild honey, was perfectly well dressed and fed, for the wilderness. Jesus walked elsewhere, and did not wear leather and camel's hair. Angels dwell in glory. The preacher who does not dress, eat, live, work, and speak as pleasingly as in him lies falls from grace. What he is should never quarrel with what he says.

Of course men impose upon good nature. They are impertinent with God Almighty. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." They will do anything for him but be good. Yet it is not written that God, who is Love, is ever anything else than love. To any intelligence but a sinner God is always attractive. It is of the misery of the lost that they cannot hate. Hate is the citizen of but one world. Neither heaven nor hell will have it. It must make its home on earth. Love is forever of the immortal.

When the Rabbi of Israel told us to love our neighbor, he told us how: we are to love him as ourselves. We are to love God by the measure of our own heart and mind and strength. He who will not consider the personal equation can love neither God nor men. The world is much

in need of a sanctified selfishness. Religion has never worn its robes as it should. Its report of the promised land has been very honestly that of the ten spies. "It is all fine enough, but its cities have walls, and there are giants in the land, and we are as grasshoppers." The minister is as Joshua and Caleb, though as one to five, and though the congregation shall stone him with stones. The ten spies died without the promised land. The congregation that took up stones dug their graves with them. It is the personal equation that companies with the glory of the Lord.

BLUE MONDAY

When, and where, and how we are, are of small moment as compared with what we are.

John Wesley did not monopolize the world as a parish.

To get a congregation of uncommon people one would need the whole county.

Kindliness is more than clothes. It is a tang of the blood. If children and dogs do not love us, it is well to consider.

There is no device of the devil to make the sun go down at noon like sham or jealousy or envy.

Men rarely fool the neighbors. They should be too wise to try.

The world is a thing of the open air. There will be wind in our curls.

For opportunity there is no resurrection of the dead.

The weakness of one's strength may be unsuspected, as the rose on the consumptive's cheek is herald of the tomb.

It is always sad when an Eden is lost in a memory of a fall.

With Omnipotence in his fingers, the great God shepherds men. Power to entice is the superlative dynamic.

What one is should never quarrel with what he says.

CHAPTER III

THE PREACHER'S IDEALS

THE ancient word for prophet was Seer. "He that is now called a prophet was aforetime called a Seer." We think of one that tells. The older world considered one who saw. In a day when press and public have their opinion of ministerial efficiency, and preachers are on the grill, it may be some of our troubles are with the seeing. The preachers' ideals are no small affair.

Some one said to a great painter that his sunsets were impossible; no mortal eye had ever seen their like. "Do you not wish you might?" retorted the artist. The painter is vision more than facile hand, or canvas, or color. The preacher is vision more than culture, pulpit, or speech. "Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions." If every child of God is to see visions, his ministers cannot be blind. Beyond any other, the preacher must be a man of dreams.

To the age we live in ideals are hardly indigenous. There has not been found among

those born of woman a great poet or a great philosopher in an unconscionably long time. The latest climax in literature is the short story. The novelist runs to quantity. Copy for the printer is vastly much the eclipse of fame and the epitaph of worth. The multitude is at school to the moving picture and the morning paper. The historian of the times is the reporter. The ancient pride of men was the sword and is now the lead pencil. The great god Business is in his holy temple. The argument against war is not its wrong but its economic waste. The conscience of its day wrestled with slavery, to see it thrive; its extinction becoming a military necessity, it died in a day. The American saloon is having a like funeral, but the undertaker is the American dollar. The mighty argument against prohibition is the shift or loss of capital. Evil rarely sickens anywhere, that it is vile, but that it does not pay. Alexander Dowie and Mary Baker Eddy lived and died appreciated. Good citizenship and a decent reputation are religion to millions. In the boyhood of the writer his wise old father was wont to note, "The marble fingers of the graveyard all point up." The preacher will hardly find his ideals in his age. He must gather them from the Eternal Quiet where God dwells or be as other men are.

It is usually a compliment to be considered up to date. To the minister that is to be behind his date. The architect is not up to his bridge, the civil engineer to his railroad, the merchant to his store, or the general to his army. Each is ahead of his job. If not, he is behind it. His day's work is to be in front. The herald of good news is above his times; beyond them, not up to them.

How about the rarity of accurate Bible interpretation? How many ministers make lasting impressions as expositors? Our real theological seminaries, in pitifully many cases, are the commentaries and teachers' helps of the Sunday school. Whether standardized thinking spells either progress or power is hardly a problem. Who knows but that the current epidemic of religious humbug is the pestilence after famine of doctrine, because it is dry, and of theology, supposedly a bore? Doctrine is simply teaching. Theology is a word about God. It would seem that to a minister their mastery went with the day's work. A preacher who is not a theologian should be ashamed to draw his salary. Who would dare say our hysteria over modern scholarship might not be less acute were we ourselves masters of our mighty book? The pressure of executive work, the routine of engagements, the glare of public-

ity, the van and vacation habits of the day, the secularizing of ideals, explain much. An old-time prophet on the peak of a hill received one day a message: "Thou man of God, the King hath said, 'Come down.'" As never in the ages, the world is king: It bids the man of God, "Come down." It is better if he shall stay up.

What shall the preacher preach? The answer is, "Preach the thing the people have the right to expect." Pertinence would save many a pitiful sermon. A wise man noting a very uncertain effort on a certain occasion said, "That brother has a genius for the inappropriate." The big business not rarely done on a small ministerial capital has usually a ready explanation: the man has the wit to preach appropriately. The great Napoleon rocked the empires of the earth as in a cradle by being strongest at the point of contact. The preacher's campaign is going on a long week of one hundred and sixty-eight hours, and a possible eight half hours are his points of contact, his victories or defeats. Knowing this as well as himself, his people gather looking for smoke, eyes eager for banners, and "the dread circumstance of war," and "circumstance of war" is what they ought to get. The sermon that is not an event is a failure. When homi-

letic graveyards tell the truth a usual epitaph will be, "All quiet along the Potomac."

The preacher commonly gets what he goes after. We may think just that highly of him. An ecclesiastical Nimrod, he goes gunning for the respectful attention of his ordinary congregation, and has it. He aims at a fairly decent sermonic deliverance twice on Sunday, and brings it down. He goes after such an influence in his church and community as will maintain or improve its standing, and he gets that. He strives for a reasonably correct ethical life among his people; he establishes institutional churches; he keeps close watch on mayor, City Council, and Board of Education; he smites the saloon hip and thigh; the thing he cold-bloodedly goes after comes home in his bag. Did he go after six per cent increase in his membership, legal rate of interest as against his current one per cent, the rarity of his failure would surprise him. To live for a thing is deadly. The one great test in business, culture, politics, human life generally, is results. The faithful people expect results. The appropriate thing is results.

Concretely, appropriate preaching is something optimistic about Thanksgiving Day, a word of the incarnation at Christmas, the hope and glory of beginnings at New Year, a vision

of the living Christ at Easter, the ministry of the summertime in June, the benediction of the ordinary after vacation, and if sadly the angel of sable wing is abroad in the land, a tale of the world that passes not, where "Day shall break, and shadows flee." It means forevermore to recognize the congregation that is on hand. Rich or poor, ignorant or learned, old or young, sinner or saint, each has ears to hear and a soul under his coat. Preaching for people and preaching to them are two things. To say the proper word at the time the people look for it, and after some little fashion, in the way they like it, is to be two thirds sure of a good sermon. That motion in the Preachers' Meeting as to Sunday baseball would have been wiser had there been no snow on the ground. More good men fail than one would think from their "genius for the inappropriate."

One of the temptations a preacher must conquer, as if it might be the devil, is any disposition to say little things in a big way. It is one variety of mendacity. His high calling, solemn environment, the tragedy of human living, the dread secrets of immortality speak loudly of the large and great. The pulpit is surely a step higher than the platform. More than one good man and minister of God has been known to gnash his teeth in sorrow that

he found a reputation as a wit, a lecturer, an entertainer, and lost the Himalayan atmosphere of the Prophet of the Eternal. Like Bunyan's mighty man, the minister is one that tumbles mountains around with words. He falls to trifle. It is not a harsh or thoughtless word should one say the modern ministry is ill of the ordinary. Its strength is of the hills.

The preacher should preach that only which burns in his own heart. Every sermon should be a message. The other thing may be oratory, lecturing, dramatics, but it is not preaching. If so be the pulpiteer cannot enthuse his soul except over Browning, or some late publication, he may still preach. The Bible has no monopoly of the gospel. If salvation is nebulous and sociology keeps him alert, let him talk the thing that stirs him. A live gospel of the birds is better than a mummy gospel of the Lord. Momentum may make up for weight. A candle may be fired through boards. The great God leaves room in his universe for dead worlds and reflected light. We are all glad of the moon, though mostly we are sleeping as she shines.

The institutional church is the life belt of religion in many minds just now, and in any storm where needed it should be girded on. However, it is perfectly easy to be manager of such a projection, do enough work for two men,

die before one's time, and never rise beyond the glory of a floorwalker. Would the institutional church really sell a few more goods in souls made white and lives transformed, we might see more hope in it. When a man's heart is full with soup-kitchen, bowling alley, reading room, rummage sale, dispensary, he need think no shame. He is neither parrot, impersonator, echo, nor phonograph. He is true soul doing man fashion the will of the Master as made known to him. Nevertheless, loaves and fishes were never staples to the Nazarene. Not even miracles went far with him. Life belts do not conquer worlds. The drift of ministers to Young Men's Christian Association work has been inevitable for half a decade, and a benediction beyond words. As a perennial shelf for prophets, there is more to be said. The record as to selling out apostles for a supply of deacons is not encouraging. The church as a collection agency is hardly more hopeful. Whether we can save a world when we do not save our neighbors is a matter for fasting and prayer. Absolute losses within the gates while building other gates miles down the road may be quite normal. And they may be an arrow that flieth by day.

One reason why often city preachers fail on going to the country, and without going to the

country fail also, is just here. They have become conventionalized by doing something of everything. They remind the people of a machine. The very shake of their hand speaks the undying affection of a pump handle. They do so many things that no thing matters. They let their churches drag them into a dozen services on Sunday, and their heart sleeps while hand and foot and tongue work overtime. There are things a preacher may do with his left hand, but preaching is not one of them.

Lyman Abbott says of Henry Ward Beecher that he would usually not select his text for a sermon till a few hours before preaching. He wanted to be sure of saying the thing fresh at his heart. The sermons of Bishop Simpson, wonderful to hear and seldom read, took for target the heart of the common people. A few uncommon, exotic souls read sermons. Thousands hear them. John Bunyan, dreamer, novelist, philosopher, has given the world the best definition of a preacher in all literature. "Now I saw in my dream that the pilgrims went on and Great Heart went before them."

"See here how then the child doth play the man,
And weak grows strong, when Great Heart leads
the van."

No man will wisely say that any preacher should content himself with a low intellectual

ideal of preaching. Nevertheless, for him to preach anything he does not feel, to say great words of that which is little to him, is a sight to make devils grin and the angels of high heaven weep. Dr. Frank Gunsaulus with solemn earnestness was wont to tell how in the midst of his ministry the valley of sorrow brought him visions of the hills of God. Newell Dwight Hillis, literary master, turns heartily to evangelistic leadership. Dawson's *Evangelistic Note* is a monument to the cry of a deeper soul. It was John Wesley, preacher and missionary, whose heart was strangely warmed at the meeting in London town. Saul of Tarsus became Paul the apostle that he traveled the Damascus road. No man really preaches except as he meets God. There is no vision but to the heart that burns.

In the old tale of Samson is a hint at tragedy too deep for words. "And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him." That the Lord may dwell with a man, that a man may know that the Lord dwells with him, that the Lord may depart from a man—these are mighty and terrible conceptions. But that the Lord should depart from a man and the man not know it, is the terror unspeakable. To have a Samson reputation, and to feel like Samson, when Samson is walking around dead, is the crum-

bling edge of doom. The fall is far. How sad and pitiful to be preaching out of a chilled or lost enthusiasm, to echo the ringing heraldry of other years, to mumble and chatter where once was the shout of them that sing, to say to wide-eyed men that twilight is the blaze of noon, to declare the Lord is in his holy temple when the rustle of his garments has vanished into the night! That, judged by results, so many of us did our best work when we were boys at the preaching business, is a story for the shadow and the silence where God dwells.

BLUE MONDAY

Copy for the printer is vastly much the eclipse of fame and the epitaph of worth.

Evil rarely sickens anywhere, that it is vile, but that it does not pay.

“The marble fingers of the graveyard all point up.” One hardly gets his ideals in his age.

The preacher who is not a theologian should be ashamed to draw his salary.

Pertinence would save many a pitiful sermon.

The sermon that is not an event is a failure.

To live for a thing is deadly.

The modern ministry is ill of the ordinary.

A live gospel of the birds is better than a mummy gospel of the Lord.

The record as to selling out apostles for a supply of deacons, is not encouraging. Life belts do not conquer worlds.

There are many things one may do with his left hand, but preaching is not of them.

To have a Samson reputation, and walk around dead, is the crumbling edge of doom.

CHAPTER IV

STAR PREACHERS

MINISTERS, in some markets, go cheap. It is well to know their worth. When we are told, "He . . . holdeth the seven stars in his right hand" we spell the ministers of God as vastly more than ordinary. In the Bible symbolism is a tale of their surpassing dignity. They rise above all cheapening. We dare not hold them commonplace.

Symbols are signs of things; Bible symbols of great things. Seven churches are all churches; every vital detail being found in that selection. Seven lamps of fire are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth, the rounded completed teachings of God which dispel all darkness. Seven seals are the ineffable wisdom of God which hides till the fitting hour to reveal. Golden vials are said explicitly to hold the prayers of the saints; prayers are things worth keeping. Great beasts of varied descriptions are mighty influences toward lower conditions; animals are inferior to men. Perhaps wealth and rank and fashion and empire are the masterful affairs which, brutally strong, are

yet of a cheaper order. Real genuine conditions of human life and progress are set forth in these striking Bible pictures. The only caution we need to exercise is in finding what they actually do represent. The wise one who said, "The book of Revelation finds men crazy or makes them so," had this in mind. Each and all mean something. The seven stars held in the right hand of the Lord of men stand for a glory good to remember.

The dignity of the ministry is seen not only in the technical symbol but also in Him who sends it. When the crazy girl in Philippi said that the servants of the most high God were in town Paul was grieved. Whom it may be that feed us compliments makes some difference. It is the Son of God, God himself manifest, who holdeth the seven stars in his hand. God manifest is always a more precious concept than God existent. God existent is forever academic. God manifest is at home in any human soul. So we call ourselves Christians as of more gracious content than simply followers of God. Christ is God of the noontime, the high tide, the mountain top. With our thought of God set at its zenith we can get no further in a great notion of what it means to be a minister. It is God of the glorious garment down to the foot, God of the golden girdle, God of the snow-

white head and hair, God whose eyes are flame, God whose feet are as burnished brass, God whose face is as the sun shining in its strength, God of the voice of many waters, who held the seven stars in his right hand. A minister may doubtfully think little of himself. The neighbors may not rate him high. He may come to his own and his own receive him not. But to the great God he is abundantly and forever worthwhile. "He . . . holdeth the seven stars in his right hand."

Again, the dignity of the ministry is seen in its commanding use. As the candlestick holds the light, so in his right hand God holds the seven stars. In great content he makes himself a candlestick for his ministers. The Bartholdi Statue of Liberty in New York harbor has a torch in her right hand. Liberty is not fool-proof. She is Liberty enlightening. Liberty is not obvious. Men may stumble over her. She must swing her lantern. Glorious France, the great republic, the mighty world, the city of New York, the art of the sculptor, the towering statue, the hopes and fears of freemen every where, all wait upon the flickering torch. So the great God is happy at breaking into flame in his ministers. "We are ambassadors." "As though God were entreating you," said a Master of the order. With Omnipotence on the

leash, why is it not frankly used? Earthquakes, great voices out of the sky, handwriting on the wall, would surely fashion as wax the stony hearts of men? Not when God has his ministers.

It is they that go into all the world to preach his gospel. Why are miracles forever few and temporary? God has his ministers. Why does the second coming of the Lord tarry, and why is it coterminous with the end of the world? God has his ministers. Why do not angels preach? God has better ministers. Angels might bungle at it. Ministers are not a makeshift. They are God's wisdom for the ages. They are the tool God is serenely willing to stand or fall with. "He... holdeth the seven stars in his right hand."

The dignity of the ministry is seen in its use of human superlative. There are seven stars. It took seven types of men to make a full-orbed ministry. No one man can be a model minister. It takes seven. In seven men one only is the composite ideal.

" 'Tis not a cause of small import
The pastor's care demands,
But what might fill an angel's heart,
And filled a Saviour's hands."

There are diversities of gifts, difference of administrations, diversities of operations, man-

ifestations of the Spirit, the word of wisdom, knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, working of miracles, prophecy, interpretations of tongues; no one man can fulfill the mighty calling of the minister of God. He may turn hopeless at once. Only the bottom best that in him lies may be his dream and prayer. Even then he is but one seventh of the model minister. He is an unprofitable servant. That which was his duty to do only hath he done.

The dignity of the ministry is seen in its expansiveness. Bible stars are merely points of light. The author of Genesis says "He [God] made the stars also." His world was geocentric. Stars were a convenience, an annex. We know the stars are worlds. To the Genesis writer they were an appendix to the earth. The science of Patmos was not more advanced. The stars were but symbols of light, and leading, and plenty, and kindness. To us they spell a universe hardly less overwhelming than the Eternal. So in this symbol of the stars is seen a ministry that will never grow less but forever widen with the years. There have been rainbows while there have been mist and sun. But on a day God gave the rainbow a new message. It was henceforth not only bow but promise. The earth was no more to be shaken out of its place. So as the stars grow on us, and the rain-

bow grows on us, the ministry grows on us. Its To-morrow is forever mightier than its To-day. If one sometimes queries whether ministers are to lose their mission in the crushing egotism of the earth, he may assure himself God's ministers are an immortal breed. The room of him who falls is taken by the comrade at his heels, and the victory draws ever nearer.

“What, then, is he whose scorn I dread,
Whose wrath or hate make me afraid?
A man; an heir to death; a slave to sin;
A bubble on the wave.”

Bible stars stand for the glorious. That he calleth the stars by their names is the glory of God. That ministers are ranked as stars is their glory. Bible stars are useful. They give light, rule the night, follow the seasons, guide the journeys of men, awaken their minds, declare the glory of God. So the ministers, as the stars, earn their keep. The pastor is a minister, one who serves. Clergymen are granted favors as being of worth in social and economic affairs. Bible stars are symbols of abundance. Sand on the seashore and stars in the sky spell plenty. The ministry is an asset to the earth. Armies, institutions, churches, hospitals, home, market, school, empire, the cradle, or the grave, cannot write their history saying little of the ministry.

Probably holding the stars in his right hand has in it the idea of shielding and protection. God is between his servants and trouble. "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm." But the larger concept is of strength and command. Jesus standing at the right hand of God in Stephen's vision is a symbol of the throne, authority, the dynamic. Stephen falls and dies. Stephen's Lord is King of kings. A few persecutors are negligible. So holding the stars in the right hand means more than simply holding. In our Protestant reaction from apostolic succession we may easily swing too far. God would have us know that to the end of time he has large business for his ministers. His gospel is not geared to get on without preaching. It was a preaching of the cross from the beginning, but it was preaching. It was not to be a failure and need the return of Jesus to cover its retreat. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings... of good." Organization is never to take the place of preaching. The candlestick is a farce without the candle. Sacraments do not supplant preaching. The altar is below the pulpit. Fellowship does not take room from preaching. The church is more than a meeting house.

Social service, philanthropy, culture, all are good and wise, but the staple of the gospel is preaching. "He . . . holdeth the seven stars in his hand."

The dignity of the ministry suggests practical lessons without number. What a pitiful spectacle is a ministerial trifter! It is suggested that money returns are keeping men out of the ministry. Men so kept out are well kept out. No man with social, literary, financial, or political ambitions beyond an ordinary common sense, should dream of preaching. The preaching is improved when ecclesiastical ambition is added to the list. David is not always happy in the back pasture. No man readily discouraged should preach. The juniper tree is poor timber for a pulpit. What a sense of the dignity of the ministry it was that led to monasticism! The comfort of home, the joy of life, the honor of parentage, the passing on of the family name, the wealth of friendship were supposed a small price for the dignity of the ministry. Of what great worth in a minister is a worthy daily manner and conduct! The custom of those churches which insist on their ministers wearing a garb is not all folly. A conventional garment is a conservator of dignity. Doubtless the regnancy of the holy man, the priest, the prophet, the monk

has been much in his robe in all ages and lands.

It is doubtful if a reputation as a *raconteur* is any large help to a minister. Men laugh but do not linger. The story-telling gate to heaven is on a side street. The lecture habit among preachers has grown with the decline of the evangel. It is the actor who graces the stage. The inviting grin waiting for applause is better veiled. Here is the evil of slang in the pulpit. It is not wicked but cheap. The oft-quoted reaction from the legendary long face of the fathers is moonshine in the main. The soldier of the Argonne did not come home with a smirk. He had looked Death in the eyes. With vision of two worlds he had grown great. Here is the value of mastery in scholarship. No man can feed on the mighty thinking of the ages and be a clown. Human life is neither circus nor sawdust. The minister travels up rather than around. His commission is from Him who holds the seven stars in his right hand.

Its affiliation with the churches is of the dignity of the ministry. The seven golden candlesticks were a sky for the seven stars to shine in. Organization is preaching. The minister is in company with the constructive. He is of the family of law and order. The great institutions of life are preachers. The in-

stitution of sex, the institution of races, the institution of tribes and nations, the institution of sacrifices, the institution of the sacraments, all are sermons in form and shape. The very universe is a ministry. It is a platform, a house for men, an opportunity for service, that it may preach. "The heavens declare the glory of God. Day unto day uttereth speech."

Likewise the Bible is preeminently preaching. Its history, ritual, legislation, poetry, prophecy, doctrine, are of the pulpit. The historian is through with one when he has finished his record. The legislator adjourns when his law is on the statute books. The teacher's lesson is his epitaph. The singer is done with his song. The empire of other men is the mind. The empire of the minister annexes the conscience. Every other man rests with culture. The minister is content only with character. Every other man deals with what men think and feel and do. The preacher deals further with what they are. The literature, science, art of the Bible are small affairs to its preaching. The ministry is in company with the greatest book on earth, and is at ease.

BLUE MONDAY

In some markets ministers go cheap.

The Bartholdi Statue of Liberty in New York harbor has a torch in her hand. Liberty is not fool-proof. She must swing her lantern.

Angels do not preach. God has better ministers. Angels might bungle at it.

No one man can be a model minister. It takes a composite of seven of the best to be that thing. "He . . . holdeth the seven stars in his right hand."

To the Bible the stars are an appendix to the earth.

They have grown on us. The ministry grows on one.

It is suggested that money returns are keeping men out of the ministry. Men so kept out are well kept out.

The juniper tree is poor timber for a pulpit.

The regnancy of the holy man is often in his robe. A conventional garment is a conservator of dignity. A preacher may die of his dressing.

The soldier of the Argonne did not come home with a smirk. He had looked two worlds in the eyes. The prophet has little business with the inviting grin.

CHAPTER V

LITTLE FOXES

A MINISTER is especially liable to become irreverent. His worship is also of his day's work. The church, the Bible, the prayers, the sermon, the song, even the sacraments, are the tools of his trade. As men take sun, and air, and food, and drink, and garments, and sleep, the vital things, as matters of course, so human nature nods in its Holy of holies. The danger is that the commonplace to the minister may turn commonplace to his congregation. To be perfunctory or phonographic is a ready temptation. And every moment of it is irreverence. The established reputation of ministers as story-tellers is certainly doubtful, as now and then desirable. A prophet lost in a good fellow is questionable gain. Because the preacher can talk he turns lecturer. It does not lift the platform to the level of the pulpit. One who listens to be entertained is not the man who tarries to pray. The flippant wit so often heard as to hell and heaven is the ruin of souls unnumbered. The great and good are found as sinners not rarely just here. A careless play with

Scripture is as common and hurtful. Attention drawn to the sermon or to the machinery of worship, does not better the worship or the sermon. If one has not the reverence in his soul, it is useless as a garment. There should be nothing negligible in a minister's readiness for his work. The people have rights to the best. And God has a care for his servants.

It is of his day's work that the minister be an optimist. He has in charge a gospel, good news, glad tidings. To him all lanes have a turn. He knows no blind alleys. All things work together for good with him. And this optimism is expected. Other men being called may not answer. He must hear and come. Then, too, he walks in an atmosphere of the supernatural. He breathes high air. Seas have opened to a path, lions have lost their teeth, angels have ministered, to the like of him. How perfectly natural that he should often unconsciously become an exaggerator!—one variety of liar. His stories are told till he believes them himself. Said one of the boys a while since, "Professor, are you lecturing, or just talking?"

Whatever we do tends to be of a piece. What a pity when overstatement, undue enthusiasm, "drawing the long bow," has brought its discount! Just here is an excellent reason more for a ministerial mastery of the best literature.

It will keep the good man from economy and extravagance with the truth. In revival services, particularly, a course of reading in rationalistic channels is immensely helpful. A faith that will not stand a cool brain would better be lost. To understate, to earn a reputation for carefulness, is wiser than to amaze and astound.

After some fashion all men are warped. A particular window into life, an especial line of interest, or work, narrows us into something less than our best. The age of specializing catches us in its current. But, after all, are not ministers ministers to men? Children, women, young people, sick people and well, democrat and aristocrat, scholarly and otherwise, poor and rich, get strangely set in the same parish. Why should any master of a manse be a pastor and no preacher, or a preacher and no pastor? Why should one be an evangelist, another a teacher, another a Sunday-school man, another a civic force, another great on finance? It is, of course, very human, but why raise it into a principle? Whether we really are made of the congenial is much of a question. The oak is the child of the storm. Religion as an exotic may have its place.

There is a thing we may not be sure is a little fox. Do we not underrate the dynamic in our

religion? The mother of Jesus advised that whatsoever he said, it would be well to do. Till power came upon them the most earnest disciples waited. A great apostle was not content with believers except as they became receivers. All power is given that we may go, therefore. Thinking it over, are ministers as masterful in the dynamic gospel as with the cultural, ethical, economic, civic, philanthropic gospel? The herald of the earlier day expected God in his toil. His mission was to be not as other men are. His excuse for being was a command of the situation. Scriptural holiness was the power of God unto salvation rather than something of a sort. To him prayer was to be answered. Into the secret of this presence it is the minister who must lead.

An unmistakable little fox is the relatively small attention given to music by the minister. There are many of him actually ashamed that he cannot sing. Many more can use no instrument of any kind. The general spread of training in music, the hearty love of it in widening circles, the glorious history of Christian hymnody, the frittering folly of so much secular music, the burdening sorrows of the earth all call for ministers with the voice of song.

What about caste in the Christian ministry? The chatter about grade, fine people, better

classes, city and country churches, is considerably nothing less. And it helps no one. An episcopal polity leads to ranking and place as surely as efficiency, and as straight. Let no one fall when tempted. To be given charges that are tasks is honor. The royal purple is the aristocracy of hard knocks. How ministers deal with each other is much of a proposition. To follow a popular pastor is only a degree harder than to succeed the brother criticized and unappreciated. The thing to remember is that whatever was left is foundation to him that cometh after. The skill with which one can adjust and adapt is the measure of his success. Our predecessor had his faults; and when we move on, it will be found that we had ours. To be reminded earlier has happened. "Why should the spirit of mortal be proud?"

It may not appeal overlargely, but the accommodated use of the Holy Scripture is always a questionable matter. If the Bible is virtually a word of God, it is a compelling situation. To make a plaything of it is worse than doubtful taste. It should be used in no fashion but as the heraldry of the highest. A mistake is not germane. Mistakes are inevitable. But to use deliberately any portion of the great good book except in its original intent has no final end but evil. All laughable turns of the Bible, except

as humor is of the record, should be absolutely unknown. There is something unethical in the frequent tirade against scholarly study of the Bible. All we should ask of any man is scrupulously honest intention. With open sincerity no man can damage the book of God. The hypocrite cannot harm it. The world needs rather more than less of what men call Bibliolatry.

A very common evil among ministers is professionalism. With those of liberal notion of ordination, costume, etc., it is particularly unnecessary. It is worth while any time to be taken for a man rather than a minister. The man will take all care for the minister. The traditional notions of ministerial ethics are commonly a burden grievous to be borne. The red-blooded contact of brother men, common toilers in a common field, can always be attained if there is a will thereto. True courtesy, to its owner, always comes easy.

Perhaps the most dangerous perplexity ministers encounter is in their dealings with woman-kind. The overmastering strength of passion or plain infatuation, in either men or women, is suspected by few. The devil garments himself in light not rarely. There is a careless ideal in thousands of very decent people. The standard as seen in novels, plays, magazines, papers, is

often misleading and debasing. The average physician is a poor adviser. The ideals even of good women are strangely complex, and they often deceive themselves. The only solution is a perfectly sane, white attitude in every situation. The idea of a husky man putting himself in an alarmed suspicious relation toward half the human race, having his wife invariably call with him, insisting on a study in the parsonage, acting constrained or conventional toward his faithful women parishioners is to be one sort of plain fool. A man who cannot, with open eyes, informed mind, and white soul, calmly meet all comers anywhere would better leave the ministry. It is the first step, the picnicking with fascination, that is dangerous. To be forewarned is much the battle. The farther one gets beyond the halfway house, the greater the wisdom he will see in these words.

These reflections lead naturally to the domestic situation with the preacher. The average minister sadly needs a home. What he has is usually an annex to the church. His family and he are in such a unique relation to the parish that the pathetic human side of it rarely appears. One might almost pity those whom Bishop Edwin Hughes so fitly styles "the children of the manse." They do turn out surprisingly well, but it is of the Lord's mercies

that they are not consumed. The point is that if a minister is to be a minister to other people's homes, he should have one of his own. The elemental is his stock in trade, and the brand under his own roof is meaning or decay.

It is evident a line of investigation of this sort might ramble on a quarter section of forever. There is no advice for all situations. Let the minister be a big-brotherly white soul and little foxes or large will not spoil the vines. They will blossom and bear fruit.

BLUE MONDAY

A minister is especially liable to become irreverent. Worship is so largely of his day's work.

A prophet lost in a good fellow is doubtful gain.

Attention drawn to the machinery of worship or of the sermon does not better either worship or sermon.

It is perfectly natural that a minister should now and then turn out exaggerator, one variety of liar. Both economy and extravagance with the truth are so handy.

After some fashion, all men are warped. Specializing is a matter of no age.

A faith that will not stand a cool brain would better be lost.

Whether men are made of the congenial is much of a question.

Religion as an exotic may have its place. The oak is child of the storm.

An episcopal polity leads to ranking and place as surely as efficiency, and as straight.

To be given churches that are tasks is honor. The royal purple is an aristocracy of hard knocks.

All laughable turns of the Bible, except as humor is of the record, should be absolutely unknown.

The average minister sadly needs a home. What he has is usually an annex to the church.

CHAPTER VI

JESUS THE PREACHER

A LARGE part of the preacher's business is to teach. The world is to know more because he is around. He is a builder of worlds. He widens horizons. He pushes up the blue. He gathers treasures in the deep. As the world grows better it grows greater. The world suffers from its littleness as largely as from its wickedness. The preacher is an enemy of the small as of the bad. As in another time he will find old folks sending children to the rear; saints will be calling down fire; Martha will be thinking of her manners rather than piety; Peter with drawn sword, and Saul of Tarsus at the stoning of Stephen, will appear in the flesh. He will see good men at the worship of politics, making Jesus a King, and sending their gods to the cross, not knowing what they do. He will hear holy men mourning that the Son of God does not walk on earth to-day, as sorrow filled the heart of other holy men when he went away. In a word, mistakes will be his business as surely as will meanness. The minister must minister

evermore in teaching, as Jesus ministered in teaching long ago.

But teaching is not the whole story. Jesus said he came also to preach. "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent." What is preaching as distinguished from teaching? Briefly, it is teaching applied to moral results. It is teaching in bloom, at harvest, come to harbor. The end of teaching simply is the lesson. Preaching begins with the lesson. It ends only with the learning. When Jesus called attention to the Commandments he was teaching the rich young man, as also in telling him to sell what he had. As the young man went away sorrowful he left the preacher. Jesus loving the young ruler, patiently putting duty into his mental perspective, disappointed that seeing his way he walked in another, was Jesus the preacher.

When Jesus seeing multitudes of the simple-hearted following him in utter sincerity, rejoiced in spirit, it was Jesus the preacher. Nicodemus in coming to Jesus was in search of a teacher. His surprise lay in finding a preacher. Nicodemus must learn, but learn to be born again. The drive to make a man something as well as to tell him things is a mark of the preacher.

The frequent expression, "He that hath ears

to hear, let him hear," is the preacher in theory. Being in earshot, they will hear. But what will the hearing come to? "Thou hast taught in our streets," said the multitudes at the judgment. "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity," said the Judge. The teacher was not allowed to preach.

Illustration can hardly be at too great length, for the reason that ministers are in constant terrible temptation to sink the preacher in the teacher. There was never so scientific an age. To know is an obsession. The scholar is in honor. Many men leave the preaching business to teach, to write, to lecture, to reform, to better the economic situation. In every sermon, the literary, the didactic, the æsthetic, the philanthropic call so sweetly, so siren-like, that, ere the good man is aware, the lure and the rocks have won. Not that it is wrong to lecture. But how much lecturing would be done did the audience suspect an altar call went with the ticket? The lecturer commonly sells out the preacher to lecture. There is some writing that is preaching. But how much preacher writing goes further than the fascination of composition, the search for a wider world, the hunger for immortality? Jesus of Nazareth wrote only in the dust.

It is a matter of widest comment that preach-

ers cannot exhort as in the older days. It really means they cannot preach as in the older day. Exhortation is the soul of preaching. Jesus knew all tears were soon to vanish with the rising of Lazarus. But he stood at the grave and wept. The preacher in him would not quiet. Looking at Jerusalem in her beauty and glory, he wept again. The preacher was master. He would have gathered her children as a hen her brood, and she would not. When Jesus saw the multitudes he had compassion. The Jews were a healthy, wealthy, wise, and happy people. To be pitied was not of their wishes. But Jesus pitied them. They were as sheep having no shepherd, and the heart of the preacher broke.

Jesus went up into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. Later he was taken up into the holy city. Still later he was led to an exceeding high mountain. Temptations have a queer wearying to travel up. The preacher often goes up into the pulpit to be tempted of the devil. How many sermons like the Dead Sea end in themselves? That excellent notion of the bread upon the waters returning after many days has been the ruin of thousands. It is so thrilling, this talking sense before a congregation, startling them to listen, to smile, to approve, to come again, and to come again. It may not be preaching.

Sinking the preacher in any other side of his calling is calamity. The opposite, of course, no one will commend. The preacher who cannot teach, who has no new thing to tell his auditors, who tries to make up in good intentions for study, in earnestness for the world of books, in tears for brain sweat, in gymnastics for gray matter, is a discount on the breed. But in this thinking, reading age his empty pews will care for him. The danger comes to the man who can interest, entertain, and help a congregation and not preach at all. That he can do it is exactly why he is so apt to do it. And preachers of any sort growing scarce!

Now and then there will be occasion to distinguish between preaching and reforming. The time came to Jesus when the people would make him king. A king was a small affair to a preacher. Not every preacher can get well out of sight when the hunt for kings is on. The latest question the disciples asked their Lord was if the kingdom might early be restored to Israel. And witnessing to the ends of the earth was the thing worth while. To give up transforming for reforming is a bad bargain. "Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me." "Who made me a judge or a divider over you?" The conservation of property is useful, but no large affair. The

time came for Jesus to pay his taxes. He paid them. He had his opinion of some things, but lest he should give offense, he saw that all obligations to existing government were met. The familiar words, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's," will recur often. Jesus lived and spoke at a time when every other man on earth was a slave. Yet his gospel and human bondage lived side by side for eighteen hundred years. Jesus lived in a time when the man who could was king. And kings are still alive to-day. Jesus lived in a time of grave and grievous legalized social injustice. Yet he was never revolutionary. The lesson is that he felt the larger issue was the preaching.

Usually preachers are turned aside from their real work as developing special talents in special lines. The better way would be to raise up laymen who are not called to preach. The exceeding great army of preachers who become financial agents, Anti-Saloon League managers, college presidents, secretaries, and what not, is a thing to consider. The executive work forced upon bishops and district superintendents is also a matter for concern. The time was when preaching was their power. Managers may be bought in the market.

Very strangely the preacher and the philanthropist are to be distinguished now and

then. From a variety of sources comes the insistence that the care of the body, the gospel of physical comfort, is a vital element in world evangelism. The institutional church, the cults of healing, the relief of poverty in private charity, are illustrations. No one will dispute their value. The cup of cold water is a thing of high honor. Nevertheless, to sell out preaching for it is to starve the earth. That in some churches deacons are laymen did not happen. Man does not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. It is quite often worth while to go hungry and be good. It is not accident that comfort of body was so early cast in the light of a temptation. It is hardly believable men really followed Jesus for the loaves and fishes. To sell out a soul for an appetite seems almost a witticism. Jesus said it was sober fact. The miracles were preaching. The Jews took them for an end in themselves. The manna in the wilderness was not a model but a sermon. It was preaching: a table that was a pulpit, not a market.

Here lies a paralytic. He has come down through the roof. He thinks, and his friends think, that paralysis is a trouble of the first order. Jesus says sin is the trouble of the first order. His first word is, "Man, thy sins be forgiven thee." Paralysis can

wait. The body is to be dust. The soul lives forever.

Up on the Mount of Transfiguration good men thought that tabernacles might be built for a stay. But there was no congregation for preaching. Moses and Elias and Peter and James and John were already in the good way. The chance for preaching was down in the valley, and down in the valley they went.

The eagerness of Jesus for soul ministry is a lesson to be studied, pondered and remembered forever. "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" The safety of a twelve-year-old boy was a minor matter. "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also." He was restless in quiet. "If ye had known what this meaneth, 'I will have mercy, and not sacrifice,' ye would not have condemned the guiltless." Even keeping the Sabbath may wait if men are to be converted. "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign." The sign shall be preaching Jesus and the Resurrection. "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and condemn it." "They repented at the preaching of Jonas, and a greater than Jonas is here."

The strong impression of the whole Jesus example is that preaching is of mandatory and

primary value. Greater than teaching, greater than philanthropy, greater than reforming, greater than all ritual, a man comes down in shading it for anything on earth. The commanding need of the world is a resurrection of the pulpit. Jesus the Preacher is the vision splendid.

BLUE MONDAY

The world suffers from its littleness more sorely than from its meanness.

The ministerial lecturer sells out the preacher to lecture. If he is a go. Usually.

Temptations have a queer wearying for high places. One casts himself down to fall. "And I saw there was a way to Hell from the very gates of Heaven."

Preachers are called of God. Managers may be bought in the market.

The manna in the wilderness was not a model but a sermon. The cup of cold water is a thing of high honor. Nevertheless, to sell out preaching for a diaconate is to starve the earth. In many churches the deacons are laymen.

The commanding need of the world is a resurrection of the pulpit.

To give up transforming for reforming is a bad bargain.

CHAPTER VII

THE SHEPHERD CHRIST

To a world that knows what it is to be hungry, Jesus is said to be bread. To a world that dies without water, the call is to come to him and drink. To a world in the dark, he is the Light. To a world familiar with raw existence and with death, he is Life. To a world always perplexed about something, he is the Way. So to a world that cannot care for itself, he is the Shepherd, the Good Shepherd. This is the exact definition of a pastor. The pastor is literally a keeper of sheep. When Jesus said he was the Good Shepherd, he gave us the highest model. One cannot do better, would he be a good pastor, than to study the pastorate of the Christ. He may not get details. Galilee and Judea after twenty centuries show some variety. But he will get principles, and principles that will care for all details.

He will discover, primarily, that the good shepherd, the good pastor, is ethically good. He cannot be thief or robber. He can neither steal, kill, nor destroy. It is hardly wise to take it for

granted that the pastor is a good man. Jesus Christ made mention that he always did the things pleasing to God; that no one might convince him of sin. Only a faultless Christ could be a Christ. Paul said he kept his body under lest having preached to others, he himself might become a castaway. He was out in the congregation. It is not half bad that a preacher have standing as a business man, a literary proposition, a social good fellow, a success in his family, a force in his community; but his mightiest asset is a rating as a holy man. The last thing that is good, is to identify himself with holiness as a specialty, for holiness touches the whole of things. But so to live that men see a mastery of self, and of the life from God, is of vital matters. Possibly here is the widest difference between our earlier and later models. We do not impress the world, above all else, as men of God. Men of the world, men of the Book, men of speech, men of affairs, we are, but not so obviously men of God. Like Martha, careful and troubled about many things, the one thing needful to be careful and troubled about is set aside. The modern minister works no harder, nor for longer hours, than his brother of the older times. He does work at more things. He has more fingers on his hands. It is his task to see that they do not strangle his

soul. The German shiver at the mystic is likely one germ of their desolated will to war. A little more of the mystic in modern life would help affairs. The good pastor will be a good man.

The Good Shepherd knew each of his sheep by name. The pastor cares for individuals. He is inevitably a public man. He is an affair of the crowd. He is an official; the soul of an organization. He is a community force. He is an example; a mirror for the many. As a teacher, he has a school. As a pastor he follows a flock. *It may be his temptation.* All his time, all his attention, all of a great reputation, all his strength, may go to a performance. A man so tried, on being asked to get close to some concrete difficulties, very frankly demurred, saying, "I cannot come down to individuals." "You seem to have gotten further along than the Almighty," was the pertinent comment. He had fallen in love with the ninety and nine.

That Jesus cared deeply to come in contact with his world in any form, we have seen. He did not retreat when the world was just one man or one woman. He labored with Nicodemus. He converted the Samaritan woman. He sent the rich young man about his business, sorrowful. He was faithful with Mary and Martha. It is abundantly worth while to re-

member that when God sends one man our way, he is a congregation. The whole world is at church just then. It has been said the Ethiopian eunuch was the Continent of Africa. Whether that, or one black man more, Philip followed his Master, and so should we.

This concrete care of the Almighty for individuals is one of the elemental realities. Humanity was with him the building of the one man and the one woman. "God hath made of one blood all nations of men." The Bertillon system is based on the fact that no two human beings are exactly alike. They are born one at a time. They die one by one. They stand alone in judgment. They are born again one by one. Perhaps the unity of God is no more marvelously illustrated than by this unity of man. Made in the image of God, and each man irretrievably himself, we believe in one God with small trouble. There is nothing surprising then that in the outstanding record Jesus was a personal worker. As revealing God, he could have been nothing other.

An early thing to be said is that personal work is preeminently a matter of choice. A minister's public work is inevitable. The limelight goes with the job. The flash-light is his own. His private personal ministry he looks up. Should he care for it, get his heart in it, he will get it

in plenty. Should it be otherwise, the world will bring little to him.

It is a pitiful hour when one finds his people leave him alone. It tells him what he is. It is a compliment when a fellow mortal brings one his cares, or joys, or troubles. He feels there is help in him. The man who said things first about it being well to have the good will of a dog, had this in mind. One at whom baby or child will smile need not fear. There is work in the world for him.

So the earth found it in its heart to come to Jesus. The thief on the cross knew that Jesus had a kingdom on his hands, but he cried, "Remember me." One so wonderful could take on one sinner more. The disciples had some ponderous ideas, but the neighbors suspected the Master might pet their babies a little, and like it. They did not suspect wrongly. The little men and women had room in his heart, surely. Jesus was glad to go to Bethany, and it was that Bethany was glad to have him come. There are few things more beautiful than the way the crowds came to the Lord with their sick and suffering ones. The tender-heartedness with which hospitals are soon crowded in our day is of the same weave. If it could be the churches could relieve the sorrows of all the worthy poor, how wide the

open door! The woman in the city who was a sinner stood at the feet of Jesus weeping. From her deep well of shame she saw the stars in his kindly face. The doctor of the law, rich and proud, came to Jesus by night. He knew he was a teacher come from God. The pious rich young ruler came running, came kneeling, to Jesus. Jesus had word and help for wealth, and power, and holiness, as surely as for poverty, and misery, and wrong. Whether men come to us, or feel we care to have them come, is a mighty interrogation.

But how did Jesus deal with individuals? Just as we must. According to providential leadings and openings. Weary with His journey, Jesus sits on the well. Thirsty, he asks a drink. Being a Jew, the Samaritan woman is startled. The battle is on. And the woman loses and gains. Jesus turns the water into wine. A nobleman is there whose son is sick at Capernaum. One who can turn water into wine might surely turn sickness into health. "Come down ere my child die." "You would see signs and wonders?" "Not at all, I would see my child alive." "Go thy way, thy son liveth." "At what hour did he begin to mend?" "At the very hour that Jesus spoke." The mighty Master did not even need to be there. So the nobleman believes. Every step is a step

onward. Here stands a man blind from his birth. The disciples, the neighbors, the Pharisees, all get interested in the theology of his congenital blindness, and the recent stubborn fact that he sees. Jesus never forgets the man. Outside the synagogue and in disgrace, he finds him and leads him into light of soul, as he had led him into light of eyes. No strained unnatural movement anywhere. With a willing heart, method is forgettable. "Settle not beforehand what ye shall say. It shall be given you in that hour." The line of duty is self-supporting. The great undertaking for the minister is to be entirely willing toward personal work. The way will follow.

Why take time in the emphasis of these things? Because, for one reason and another, they are the very things the average minister forgets. He allows his other pressing and public duties to crowd this call aside. The priest and the Levite were not loafing. They were not hardhearted. They thought of the man among thieves as a matter they might look after later. They were ridden of their routine. Personal work at bottom is the only real work. A crowd is only a multiplied man. A public affair is only a private affair out-of-doors. All our teaching, ritual, philanthropy, is simply to get at the man. Why fall in love with

rod and line when it is fish in the creel that count? Hook, and bait, and fisherman are silly without fish.

Again our emphasis may help us in keeping small affairs in their places. How much time we waste over the secondary! Shall I go out calling on the families alone? Should I have a study in the church? How much attention should go to a given case? A white soul is safe anywhere. A reputation is immortal till its work is done. The cross of Jesus was a cross of shame. To live in dread of its like is folly.

The supposed dignity and reserve of the individual soul is greatly stressed in our day. I must not press religion upon my neighbor, for his inmost life is sacred to him. Following the line of Providence will care for all this and more. One cannot find a single case of bad manners in all the personal work of Jesus. There need be none in ours. One does not cease to be a gentleman when he turns saint. Mary was entirely as courteous as Martha, to say no more. If any man opens his door at your knock, walk in. If he will not, walk on. "Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of Man be come."

The Good Shepherd is considerately good. He is good at heart. He is kind. "He calleth his own sheep by name." "The sheep follow Him."

"The hireling fleeth, . . . and careth not for the sheep." The Good Shepherd cares, and therefore knows his sheep, and his sheep know him. He lays down his life that he cares. The good pastor is a man with a heart.

The rage for utility, the practical, as men say, often smothers the affections. As if hearts were not practical. The average pastor foregathers with complexities and perplexities till he is likely to get automatic. A good rule is to take on enough things only, and such things, as permit the heart to function. With a pastor to be automatic is to be no pastor. A pastor is something finer than a phonograph. The professional tone and manner is not quite as bad as the small-pox, but the pastor begins where the machine leaves off. The unusual play on the pastor's sympathies and affections tends and tempts to cant and hollowness. It is well to guard one's self. An actor conquers in this matter; a minister surely should. The Nestor of public speaking at Northwestern University, Robert McLean Cumnock, would never admit his ready tears in a pathetic recitation were ever forced. One who came to know of his great heart always believed him.

Sometimes the intellectual ambition glazes over the play of the heart. Culture is on vacation in the hour of emotion, it is supposed.

It would rather seem that expression took more wit than suppression, in emotion as in anything other. An overdose of the efficient likely had as much to do with the recent Teutonic paroxysm as some other matters. Men do not laugh at their feelings and grow wise. The head and hands of the world are forever in debt to its heart. An underestimate of affectional values is as dangerous as an overrating. Our people should feel as certainly as they sometimes respect and admire. Nor can love be counterfeited. We must consider, till a genuine love for our people, all sorts of people, sweeps away every indifference and distaste. It is easy to hunt up our congenial friends. Do not even the publicans so? A compassion toward any kind of man that leaves one eager to company with him is the sort of the Shepherd Christ.

Another thing is true. Sheep are sometimes contrary. The shepherd has a call to be efficient; just anybody may not keep sheep. Jesus went to folks who did not care. He did not press himself long. His earnestness was never impertinence. But he went. He taught his disciples to go into another city when the nearer doors were closed. They were not to give that which was holy to the dogs, nor cast their pearls before swine. Only they were to hear

the bark and squeal. Where there is a kennel or sty there is usually a house. There were times when he did his preaching with a whip. It was not often. The Hohenzollerns of the earth are scarce. To be scourged of such a whip, and for such a cause, is shame unspeakable. The temple of God had been made a den of thieves. There may be genuine kindness in a sermon with a whip.

The Pharisees gave Jesus no water for his feet, no kiss, no oil for his head. They did give him criticism. "This woman is a sinner." And Jesus allows her touch. Nevertheless, with the north wind blowing, Jesus went and took dinner with the Pharisee. He sent his disciples to a village of the Samaritans to make ready for him. He will bring them a blessing. They see him headed for Jerusalem; they will not receive him. So he went to another village. But he had stood at their door. One of the most significant of the Bible pictures is one where it reads, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock." An Omnipotent one might walk right in, but he stands at the door and knocks. When the swine were drowned in the sea, the owners beseech of Jesus that he will depart. He is too small a price for pork. "And he entered into a ship, and passed over." But he had stood at the door and knocked.

It is possible to overdo and underdo. The ordinary pastor is supposed to have some wit. The temptation of the congenial is always with us, of course, but giving the whole parish its rights, relaxing with the congenial, is rule enough. A pastor is foolish to make a drudge impression. A treadmill pastorate is no pastorate. It is rarely wise to call when ill or weary. One will get into the hospital often enough without carrying it around with him. It is very possible to find pastoral duties largely enjoyable. When one reads that Jesus "went about doing good," he feels his Master was delighted with every minute of it. The Edenic picture of the Lord God, "walking in the garden in the cool of the day," is a happy one. The Hebrew read it as the "breeze of the day." The pastor should never forget that he is to go about as an inspiration. Neither perspiration nor desperation is called for. A breeze is another matter. If the cool of the day is not in his soul, a visit at the beach or in the mountains, or near the feet of the Eternal Quiet, is the prescription. The sense of toil and burden is not of the five senses with the pastor. He is to be efficiently good.

Better than all, the Good Shepherd is shepherd of his own. The sheep are his sheep. He knows them one by one, and name by name.

No father loses his child in his family. Each is ever of the flock, though called to another fold. In the fold of the upper skies, his heart still claims its own. So it happens no pastor should get over anxious as to his particular fold. He might get into a place that is not his own. Whether his parish is large or small, he must be at home. It is woe to him that cannot belong, As rapidly as possible, one should bring his people to a sense of obligation toward him. Illness, and trouble, and joy, weddings and funerals, special functions of any sort, will find the good pastor not very far away. The sense of loyalty to a stated pastor is a good running start, but one is not a pastor till his person has gently crowded aside his office.

Especially as one has children born of his loins, as his voice calls, and his hand leads some darkened soul to light, will he come to feel he is shepherd of his own. The family feeling in a church is a priceless treasure. A band of good people the writer knows has called itself "The Church of the Family Circle." Church love is a rarer gem than church pride. This latter, it is suspected, is sometimes paste. When people linger along the aisles as if loth to leave each other and the Father's house, white angels slip aside in tears, and a softer sweeter music sings

their joy. The informal thing is usually the real thing.

It is commonly a mistake to lengthen a pastorate when any considerable number of people are weary over it. It is a peculiar mentality that is so affected, to be sure, but these queer bodies do not grow less with time. The trouble is, the family feeling breaks up, and the few distress the many. The average church would wisely double its Official Board. The burden sweetens the bother. To belong, to be at home, is a vital atmosphere about a church, and great prices may well be paid for it. Simon Magus is not so great in more of a crowd. The frequent habit of building choirs with money and voices, rather than with souls in white raiment, works large damage. Even good music should not break up the family. The good shepherd will be shepherd of his own.

“We lean on others as we walk
Life’s twilight path, with pitfalls strewn,
And ’twere an idle boast to talk
Of treading that dim path alone.”

BLUE MONDAY

It is hardly wise to take it for granted that the pastor is a good man. It was an apostle who dreaded that he might become a castaway.

The modern minister works no harder nor for longer hours than his brother of the olden times. He does work at more things. He has more fingers on his hands. It is his task to see that they do not strangle his soul.

It is a pitiful hour when one finds his people leave him alone. It tells him what he is.

The priest and the Levite were not loafing. They were not hard-hearted. The man among thieves might be looked after later. They were ridden of their routine.

One cannot find a case of bad manners in all the personal work of Jesus. One does not cease to be a gentleman that he turns saint.

Men do not laugh at their feelings and grow wise. The head and hands of the world are forever in debt to its heart.

There may be genuine kindness in a sermon with a whip.

A pastor is foolish to make a drudge impression. A treadmill pastorate is no pastorate.

One is not a pastor till his person has gently crowded aside his office.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CULTURAL CHRIST

It is probably the common thought that God reveals himself because he cares to. He chooses to speak. He might choose to be silent. It is the better concept that he could not be dumb. Of Infinite justice, he cannot live to himself. Of Infinite love, he must love outside. As any normal woman aches to get her fingers on a baby, so God wearies for other than himself. God is of infinite power. Simply to have and hold would be to such an one ennui and stagnation. Infinity caged is a contradiction in terms. It is said of a poet, "He lisped in numbers, for the numbers came." The inventor contrives from the cradle. An æsthetic body likes flowers, music, rhythm, beauty before he can tell why. So God expresses himself, being God. Thus men have wondered if even matter is not eternal. It may be more than incidental that a Hebrew word in Genesis for "create," means to cut, fashion, shape into form. When God speaks it is from the overflow. He enjoys it beyond any who hear. Who has not marked the profuseness

of nature? Men call it waste. If it did no more than envisage the unimaginable wealth of God, it is not waste. We simply do not follow.

We shall see that God reveals himself in Christ as Ruler and King. The soul of order and of law, he could not create an irresponsible world. Things might happen. Being created intelligently, nothing happens. So with intelligent beings on hand, God holds himself under bonds for speech with them. The most utterly responsible being in all the universe is the God of the universe. It is thought and said that the source of law is lawless. "The king can do no wrong." The wiser thought is, an infinity of love, wisdom, power, justice is carried into a superlative responsibility. "He that teacheth men knowledge, shall he not know?" "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" "God is love." These superlatives are to say that God holds himself to a superlative standard. He is as good as we are, and better. A man of genuine veracity needs no whip about his head. His disposition is a thousand whips. A woman's white soul is safer in her own keeping than in that of "all the king's horses and all the king's men." So the earth has rest in its God. He will forever do the best, for the best of reasons: he is the best.

What greater incentive to law-abiding among

men than this conformity to standard in God? How utterly heinous and hideous are thievery, lying, licentiousness, in such a vision! It is this that makes the ordinary citizen impatient with an insistent pacifism. How one can inherit and enjoy all the benefits of good government, his very life and belongings conditioned thereby, and for any reason refuse to go any reasonable limit in defense thereof, he cannot see. The man who recently said, "The pacifist denies that there is anything on earth worth fighting for," put it exactly. That for conscience sake, and with the great God in his eyes, a man should write himself down a nonentity, is an unthinkable situation to coordinate with sanity.

When we come to consider God as Teacher or Revealer, this line of reasoning is illuminative. In the early verses of John's Gospel, it is masterful. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "The same," the Word, "was in the beginning with God." "All things were made by him," the Word. "Without him," the Word, "was not anything made that was made," "In him was life"—in the Word. "The life was the light of men." The Word was the light of men. "The light," the Word, "shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehendeth it not."

Of course we know that "The Word" is a

New-Testament name for Christ. But names, like other words, are signs of ideas. It is greatly more so in the Bible than in ordinary modern usage. The idea of revealing, of making known something hidden, is the vital concept in any word. Thoughts are secrets except for words. Men think in words. The mind is a Sahara except for words. Jesus called "The Word," as an arbitrary appellation, only a handle to hold him with, is against all Scripture practice. No Bible name for Jesus is insignificant. How rich, then, those long-weighed sayings of the Patmos seer, as to Jesus the Word! Whatever other, he was surely the Cultural Christ.

If "In the beginning was the Word," then, Biblewise, culture is of the very philosophy of existence. We not only live and learn but we live to learn. "The heavens declare the glory of God." "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. . . . Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." "When the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves." "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." "I must preach the kingdom of

God . . . for therefore am I sent." "We know that thou art a teacher come from God." "He opened his mouth, and taught them, saying." Thus in numberless emphatic forms the great Book draws the picture of the cultural Christ. "The lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, . . . like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken."

That "The Word was with God" is to prepare the mind for the larger concept that "The Word was God." As God is love, so with John God is culture. All knowledge is sacred. There is no secular learning. The scientist is also a priest. The great world is a temple. The soul of a man is interwoven with his brain. It is not disputable that religion in the earth has lost immeasurably by narrowing itself. The Jews coolly set the whole Gentile world to one side, one man giving law to ninety-nine. Romanism interpreted all religion in its own terms. It is hardly within a hundred years that Christendom has been planetary in its concept. The heathen were all lost. And they were the vast majority. Calvinism narrowed religion to the elect. A recent great deliverance by a great man insists with emphasis that the one word, "redemption," is the great dominant word in life and religion. Then more than all other the world is a hospital. Then the native air of men is distress. Then

human life is an emergency. Yet in the beginning, it was the Word that was with God. Jesus, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, surely has other air than the anæsthetic. Human life must be at school beyond common belief. "And the Word was God." God is essentially knowledge. That "God is love" we do not object. We think it a wonderful emphasis on the kindness of the Eternal. So that "The Word was God" is also an emphasis on the wisdom of the Eternal. Everything other that God may be is shot through with love. We trust his justice that it is kindly. We are glad of his power, for it is never cruel. He is immutable; His love will never change or pass. As truly as God is love, so truly is he wisdom. "And the Word was God." The brightness of his glory, the express image of his person, is the Cultural Christ.

"The same was in the beginning with God." Why does John emphasize what he so lately said? For the simple reason that men are so likely to forget. A negligible Christ has been the sorrow of the world. A Christ who was but a man, a Christ who was only a teacher, a Christ who did not atone; a Christ of ritual, tradition, creed, ecclesiasticism against all these true and partial concepts John sets his superlative Christ who was nothing less than

God. "In the beginning," from the very earliest hour where we need to think, he was forever God. "The same was in the beginning with God." For a large Christianity there must be forever a large Christ. The Cultural Christ is never negligible.

"All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." The Cultural Christ was the Creator. All creation has a cultural philosophy. That creation antedated sin this cultural philosophy is primary. It is still primary with sin in the world. God did not drop his wide designs that men went wrong. He did not go on a waiting list. The earth is a school to-day as certainly as a shop, a hospital, and a court. The earth is a shop, a court, and a school more fundamentally than it is a hospital. Were there any need for a dominant Christ, it would be the Cultural Christ.

What a vision is this of a unified universe! Unified around the Cultural Christ: all things made by him; nothing made without him; one author, one world, one humanity, one philosophy, one purpose, one destiny, one revealing of the only God. What a vision splendid that there is nothing insignificant! "Without him was not anything made that was made." Without the "Word," the meaningful thing, is

there nothing that is. It was poetry in Shakespeare, but it is the coldest, most inescapable fact that there are "books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything."

"In him was life; and the life was the light of men." It is the life eternal, the life of God in the soul, that is in mind. Vegetable life, brute life, ordinary physical life are at the side. The life that is the light of men, that interprets every other, that is to man his superlative glory, that, worked out universally, would make a heaven out of earth—this is the life that we are to consider. That, says the apostle who understood his Master better than any other, is possible only through the Word, the Cultural Christ. There is no piety without brains. The frequent contrast between the emotions and the intellect, prayer and study, is simply time and energy wasted. Prayer is study and study is prayer. There is no choice between hands and feet, no quarrel between the senses, no friction of the bush and rose. The truth has a thousand teachers.

These words are written with the profound conviction that the Cultural Christ has been woefully underestimated. Precisely as John says, "The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehendeth it not." There is no

ethical note here, no word of distress, simply the incitement to seek the Cultural Christ. The loaves and fishes, the cry of pain, the march of the race are ever near us, but closer than all is the call to learn.

BLUE MONDAY

A man of genuine veracity needs no whip about his head. A woman's white soul is safer in her own keeping than in the care of all the king's horses and all of the king's men.

All knowledge is sacred. There is no secular learning. The scientist is a priest. The great world is a temple. The soul of man is interwoven with his brain.

The mighty God did not drop his wide designs when men went wrong. He did not go on a waiting list. The earth is a school to-day as certainly as a hospital, a shop and a court.

There is no choice between hands and feet, no quarrel of the senses, no friction of bush and rose. Each is a teacher of the truth. Prayer is study and study is prayer. One's library is a temple.

Simply to have and to hold would be ennui to such an one as God.

No Bible name for Jesus is insignificant.

Religion in the earth has lost immeasurably by narrowing itself.

CHAPTER IX

THE PEDAGOGY OF THE NAZARENE

THAT Jesus of Nazareth is a great teacher in the earth is nowhere in argument. His Deity, miracles, atoning are an arena. His culture is a throne. There are many masters among men, but the Rabbi of Israel holds his place. Human history is not history in silence with his name. He may be doubted. He has been antagonized. He cannot be overlooked.

Teaching was of his mission. It was not incidental. It was mandatory. "He went about teaching." "He opened his mouth and taught them." "We know that thou art a teacher come from God." As he came to preach, to toil, to save, to give his life a ransom for many, so he came "to teach the way of God in truth." "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." To teach was not a happening with the Nazarene. It went with his day's work.

The pedagogy of the Nazarene was frankly spiritual. He was a teacher come from *God*. His classes study to a purpose of his own. His

curriculum should be judged in light of that intent. Does a school live up to its charter, we do not criticize. No cult has yet arisen the earth dares to substitute for the Jesus projection. It is a universal suspicion that failure to resolutely apply it is the wrong and sorrow of the planet.

From thought of place, time, and condition, the woman of Samaria was shut up alone with God, as being Spirit, and whose worship was in spirit and in truth. Nicodemus came to Jesus on the level of scholarship. He would learn more, know more. To his amazement, he heard he was to be more. "Except a man be born again, born of the Spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Would men make him king, Jesus hides himself. Must he have money, the mouth of a fish is his bank so negligible is wealth. Priest, ruler, rabbi all meet him on the horizontal. His kingdom is not of this world.

The pedagogy of the Nazarene was psychological. Our latest half century is wondrous proud in its final mapping of the human mind according to gray matter. Psychology is our great last word. The laboratory of Jesus nineteen centuries since was its forecast. The wonder is we find the secret so late. The world of the year One, read success and life in terms

of kings and combinings. Our world tells us the whole business is only a convenience. Democracy, the rule of the ruled, is now the wisdom of the earth. No one force under heaven or among men has so brought about this end as the gospel of the Nazarene. Does the individual do well, the world is safe. The message already looks immortal. Not long since a man of many millions died, as he had hoped, a poor man. He had succeeded in giving away nine tenths of it all. And it was Jesus who said a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things possessed. Just now the ideals of the world are a league of nations, an end to war, a square deal for men, a living chance for immortality. It was Jesus who said the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart were the salt of the earth and the light of the world. A psychology that could endure and conquer through twenty centuries is probably not far wrong.

So the pedagogy of the Nazarene is utterly *human*. "The common people heard him gladly." The magnet is not far to find. The high level of his utterances had its due weight. The essentially large outlines of the mental man everywhere respond to large appeal. The eloquence of the red Indian, the seafaring man, the mountaineer is illustrative. The helpful

sympathy with pain and trouble was no small factor. Men feel as deeply as they think. The neglect of caste would attract. Caste is artificial. The human is indigenous. Rich and poor, high and low, cultured and provincial, men, women, and children all found their interesting portion. The domestic, democratic, urban, rural air gave everyone cheer to breathe. The hen and chickens, broom and whip, leaven and meal, sowing, reaping, building, mustard seed, lilies of the field, birds of the air, thorns, tares all found folks where they lived. The irrepressible optimism would get response. Sin, sickness, death, trouble were given a new perspective. The whole man and his whole life so intrigued, one would be an oddity did he not somewhere stop, look, and listen. That the antagonism of sin was never met by compromise, but always by conflict, would not drive so much as draw. There is little more human than the wrong. The human teacher with a human message, and all for human good, one should wonder there was ever an indifference.

The pedagogy of the Nazarene was constructive. "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." There was no good thing he could not use. He built his gospel out of the planet. The frequent concept, even among good men,

of a disappointed God, waiting, finger in mouth, till another age and better environment shall fulfill his will, is as far from the fact as it can well get. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." He has been building every minute, adding stone to stone out of all nations, under every sun. Naaman the Syrian, Cornelius the Roman, the Queen of Sheba, the Ethiopian eunuch all find their place among the children of the light. "And there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." The Jews were disappointed that Jesus would not turn king and rule the Romans. He did a greater thing in getting an epistle written to the Romans. To call down fire is easy. To save is task. Hammer and trowel are mightier than the sword. Herod hoped to see some miracle. He saw how a good man could die, and conquer fate. The very apostles could dream no higher than a Palestinian kingdom, a pocket empire for a handful of Jews. Jesus taught and lived after such fashion that no one on the planet finally escapes him. "He reigns where'er the sun doth his successive journeys run." His house is builded on a rock.

It is rather strange the original impression of the Sermon on the Mount is one rarely remembered. "He spake as one having authority." The pedagogy of the Nazarene was author-

itative. That so very many people have good great words for what Jesus said, and will not worship him as the Son of God, is either an idiosyncrasy or the sign of a hard heart. Men ran to him or from him, as they faced him in the long ago. There was only one Judas in twelve, and he could hang himself easier than to come back. It was bitter weeping that Peter did. It was doubting Thomas who came to cry, "My Lord and my God." "Never man spake like this man." The Son of God was one without a brother. Talking with him, men faced their Judge, their King. So we understand certain phenomenal matters on record. "And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions." "But he passing through the midst of them went his way." "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." Jesus was significantly the Master. His word is law.

Just where the teaching of Jesus ran, and its editing began, we do not always know. We look at the prophet of Nazareth through the eyes of his reporters. The mightiest single literary force among men did His only recorded writing on the ground. What we have in the New Testament, precisely, is not what Jesus said, but what some half dozen good people say he said. The

Nazarene was strangely careless about his memorials. Possibly he was strangely careful. It may be that poor humans lose by being so mightily thoughtful about themselves. Did they let their friends go gunning for their little high places among their kind, they might find them sooner, and keep them longer. The record is, the Rabbi of Israel left his fame to the mercies of the dust and the treacherous memories of men. When we consider the pedagogy of the Nazarene we may stray ere aware into the pedagogy of the reporter. The unutterable thing is that the Teacher of Nazareth was entirely content with the risk. His pedagogy was perspicuous, transparent, obvious. It would flame in any lantern. He was so sure, did he give it time, the old earth would be kind to him. And kind beyond all measure it has been.

“The head that once was crowned with thorns,
Is crowned with glory now.”

The critics of Bible criticism have not always been friendly to their Lord. He has entered their house, to be wounded, again and again. Were Jesus as nervous as his followers, betimes, he could neither teach, nor toil, nor rule, nor save the world. Is he veritably the Son of God, Christian polemics are invincible. Apologetics

and apologies are two things. When we learn the pedagogy of the Nazarene is safe in any hands, we shall know the quiet of the skies. If the geocentric system of the universe, a creative week, a universal flood are not longer considered vital to the Christian faith, there may be things yet other to keep them company. It is little to the credit of good men in any age to be recorded as densely, stubbornly, opposed to what turns out to be the truth. It is not the magic of the Bible that is important but the magic of the truth. It is the Bible itself that is committed to the saying, "We can do nothing against the truth but for the truth." One who is himself the truth may be trusted with its campaign.

That the teaching of Jesus should be measurably misunderstood is inevitable. That it comes to us second-hand is only a beginning. As always happily happens, its reporters differ among themselves and its very first appearance is a complexity. The last thing the masters of human learning ever do is to agree. This copy of the printer comes through differences of race and training. It comes over long years. It filters through varying languages. It is forever at the mercy of its versions. The prejudices of self-interest deflect it early and late. The varieties of Christian thought and creed and

practice are exactly to be expected. The truth is the only thing more nearly immortal than mistakes. That the Nazarene did not provide against them is a fair sign they are not fatal. The gospel is no flowering under glass, tender, exotic, but a hardy weatherwise child of the open air, and native to the storm. It does not die of its misreadings.

All this is so because the pedagogy of the Nazarene was intended to be understood. Its vogue is its dynamic. It thrives that it is transparent. It blooms of the limelight. It is cradled at high noon. So the miracles. They were called signs and wonders. They did not live for themselves. They illumined. Unlike the modern variety quite too often, they did not need explaining and a wondrous patience. That men might know, the lame, the paralyzed, the very dead arose and walked. They did not questioningly feel a little better. So the Christ persistency and emphasis. Jesus literally wasted words. Day and night, to few and many, accepted and disbelieved, over wise and foolish, indifferent and contentious, he flung broadcast the golden seed of harvest. The birds of the air, the thorns, the tares, the rust, took toll, but never more than toll. With the early and the latter rain, the thirty, sixty, and hundred-fold held mighty tales of the sower who went

forth to sow. So also the wealth of illustration. Doubtless the separate teachings of Jesus, stated didactically, might be held in less than a dozen Bible pages. Preachers and pedagogues are wary of repetition. Jesus taught his lessons over and over, and re preached his sermons without economy or dread. Preachers and pedagogues relatively illustrate rarely. It is forced upon them that they really know so little, and feel so feebly the force of what they do know. Jesus had at his command a universe of his own, and was a perfect medium for ready transmission of its lessons to any illuminating end. Had he not been limited by human incapacity to appreciate, the New Testament would be a volume to which men would say their prayers. That it is so far a fetish as it is, may be a warning.

That the Holy Spirit, and all the time this side the Day of Judgment, was left to guide us unto all truth, is significant. It could only so be borne. What sort of sermon Jesus would preach to angels may not be imagined. As an illustrator the Rabbi of Israel has never been equaled. That his sayings have such a clientage is in a measure interpreted here. The human race is at best a kindergarten. It was a wise man that grappled for it with pictures and stories. He was hungry to be understood. So

also the wondrous white life. How very much human wisdom is hidden in its casing of clay! The teachings of Jesus shone through such pearl and diamond beauty as men could never invent nor obtain. No discount that he was inconsistent; no disappointment that his vision was short, or his hand feeble, or his soul stupid. The things he said, he was. The silent sermon was the one men not rarely heard. When cynical Roman Pilate, after search, could find no fault, we are suspicious none other might. And Pilate cared only for the lantern. The finding of the ages is of the light.

Very strangely the pedagogy of the Nazarene was *cosmopolitan*. That it dominates the world to-day is both proof and emphasis. It has kept up with the times like food, and sleep, and sun light, and love. One may speak with signs under any sky. So Jesus will draw a smile from any sort of man. Yet Jesus was a Jew: never more than one of a hundred other men. Perhaps a hundred miles from the manger where he was born was the widest extent of his travels. A carpenter going with the job does not cross oceans. As to culture, the average Hebrew boy was his equal. Like other boys, he asked questions to learn. He was fatherless in much of the plastic years. He never married. He never grew old. He was of Galilee, the

provincial corner of his fatherland. He was humbly poor, living close to the level of hand-to-mouth. His own mother went out of the family when he died. Yet the sayings of this Prophet of the byway have gone down the highways of the world like the triumph of a king. It is of the wonders of the world.

His scale of concept does not suffer when the world is all out of doors. The modern universe is confessedly immeasurable: the sides of the house are all out. Two suns lately discovered are said to be seventy-five times the size of our quite infantile luminary. And our now discounted sun is seven hundred and fifty times the mass of his whole solar system. Yet Jesus Christ was never so little discounted as to-day. It has never been forgotten that Wesley said, "The world is my parish." Yet Jesus said eighteen centuries ago, "The field is the world." Probably his world was the world of the Ptolemaic concept, geocentric, its outer reach what was in sight, but he took it all in mind, past, present, future, end. We enlarge his world. We cannot enlarge his grasp of the world. There is nothing this side of God he bows to. The neighbors said he made himself equal to God and sent him out of the world because of it. And it looks suspiciously as if this cosmopolitan outlook was the truth of the Eternal.

There was never a pedagogy so venturesome. Only the straightest truth saves the Galilæan from being adjudged insane, fanatic, liar, or plain fool, by every standard of thinking men. He tells the truth so many times, unquestionably, it looks doubtful if He ever lies. He says so much that works out well that it is a strain to class him insane or fanatic. His wisdom is so respectable that one brands his own sanity to call him fool. The roster of his wild sayings reads like an asylum or the throne of God. "I and my Father are one." "Lo, I am with you alway." "I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" "The Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins." , "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."

The world is so familiar with these sayings it forgets their impudence, impossibleness, deceptiveness, devilish wickedness are they not so. There is no such choice laid upon man under the sun as when he is asked to believe or reject Jesus Christ. His brain must whirl or worship. It is no wonder plain faith is made the secret of all religion. It is no wonder such a Christ will have of every man all or nothing. He acts

precisely as if an ideal God were at his desk and on his job. The risk he runs has nothing like it under the sun. The pedagogy of the Nazarene is radical beyond all compare or measure.

The pedagogy of the Nazarene was in much *amazing*. "They were astonished at his doctrine." In this one thing his ministers may not emulate him. One goes a long way may he meet with God. He spoke in parables: their longevity is their defense. His pedagogy was profound. Its want of pretense deceived many: he was too simple to be great. That a rich man could hardly enter the kingdom of God, that any man must be born again, that he did not ceremonially wash before eating, that he talked at length with a woman, that he would raise the dead were great surprises. The words of Jesus by the record astounded the onlookers more than did his deeds. We have so familiarized ourselves with the bewildering that we forget the adventure. It was a commanding element in the hearing given the "teacher come from God."

Of course the supernatural dynamic deliberately used by Jesus with his words could not fail of a large result. The miracles were not an end in themselves. They were propaganda professedly; not harvest but tools. "That ye may

know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (Then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thine house." "We know thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him." It is not unlikely that a more utter devotion to the Christ message may bring back the miracle some great day coming. No one less than Jesus said, "Greater works than these shall ye do; because I go unto my Father."

To the mind of Jesus his pedagogy was exhaustive. He felt he had the last word. He did not give away what his short time allowed, but made his years hold out till his teaching was completed. Jesus died on time. He had things yet to say, and men were poor for need of them, but to say them was to waste them. They could not be borne. Later these slow scholars might be guided into nothing less than all truth. It is significant that in the very shadow of the cross Jesus should say his teaching was of his business under the sun. There is a cultural Calvary. "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." The atoning values of the literal cross, mighty beyond words, are but a primer to the ever-abiding cross of the Eternal. The sufficient

cross, the real cross, is forever in the heart of God. The things that happen down the ages are its gospel. By Jesus Christ came the truth. He said, "I am the truth." He was full of truth. His disciples were to know the truth. We do not with regret consider that the lesson of Jesus was rudely broken off by certain blinded Jews, and we grope weakly in the good way where we might have run wild. We run wild. The truth has made us free. The last word Jesus might wisely say was said. The lesson was done. The chapter needed no appendix nor supplement. The word of Jesus that he had finished his work is the end of the argument.

In the light of this emphasis we may understand the not infrequent injunctions of Jesus to secrecy as to certain matters. The day of final judgment is hidden in the heart of the Father in heaven. Transfiguration is held in escrow till the Son of man be risen from the dead. The disciples for a time were not even to say that Jesus was the Christ. The leper must tell no man, but go at once to the priest. The insane man must say nothing but at home and to his friends. The mastery of the Great Teacher was upon his message, and his world was to have it after his own fashion. The coming Comforter, the Holy Spirit, was his own

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coming. He was not leaving his beloved comfortless. The lesson was to go right on. The posthumous gospel was of the pedagogy of the Nazarene. The school of Christ is no ill-endowed institution of restricted curriculum, uncertain future, and doubtful, disappointing prestige. It is the one authentic University of the Universe.

BLUE MONDAY

What we have in the New Testament, precisely, is not what Jesus said, but what some half dozen good people say he said. The Nazarene was queerly careless about his memorials. Possibly he was queerly careful.

The Rabbi of Israel left his fame to the mercies of the dust and the treacherous memories of men. He was so sure that, give it time, the old earth would be kind to him.

The last thing the masters of human learning ever do is to agree.

The truth is the one thing more nearly immortal than mistakes.

The gospel is no flowering under glass, tender, exotic, but a hardy weatherwise child of the open air, and native to the storm.

To call down fire is easy. To save is a task. Hammer and trowel outcut the sword.

The Kindergarten gets its kingdom in the utterly natural proclivities of the child. He thinks he plays and learns. So the gospel pleases the big children of the earth and they climb the skies.

CHAPTER X

THE THRILLS OF THE BIBLE

No man gets on without thrills. As a bird is built for the sky, so men are fashioned for fascinations. They die of the commonplace. After some sort the millions of the race all march to music. In the penitentiary hard labor is a benediction: prisoners go wild for things to do: final resort, in penalty, is to the solitary. Out of the penitentiary illusioned and disillusioned multitudes cry the blessedness of work. The boy hunts up adventure. Men seek wealth, build empires, go to war. One affair is named as "woman's whole existence." We cannot get on without thrills.

A thrill is a window into one's soul. It is more: it is his measure: the size of him is in his frown or smile. Weight, and urge, and destiny, all stand naked in his dreams. His longings are the man. Dying with all his music in him, he is still a musician. The artist plays with colors from the cradle. Columbus could not be small: he had worlds in his eyes. Napoleon was inevitably restless. The earth had things

undone. He died on Saint Helena less of cancer than the cage.

A great unrest, and the painter threw his dream upon the canvas to trouble or delight the earth. Fourteen long years of toil, but the witching eyes of Rachel were upon him, and they were as few days. Roosevelt writes his *Winning of the West*, and we know his soul is hot with the march of empire. A daughter of the famous Beecher family gets heartbreak over it, and *Uncle Tom's Cabin* falls about the ears of slavery, to the speeding of its undoing. Thrills are the soul of deeds forever.

Among all books the world is agreed there is A Book. The Bible is a page of the autobiography of God. The Bible is a schedule of the universe. To human history the Bible is "The House of the Interpreter." The Magna Charta of all religion is the Bible. Do we take its word, the Bible is the doorway to immortality. To lose the Bible is to beggar the world. It is surely an upper sky this parish of the Bible. And in this rare air we mutter of thrills of the Bible. The breeze of "The Book" has blown upon us.

In another hour one might wisely consider *The Thrill* of the Bible. There is a marvelous unity in this uncompanioned book. It had been hardly more manifest if stricken out at a blow.

As with a man its body has one soul. As with the day it sees one sun. It has never seemed strange to call it a book of God; the book of God. It whispers, rumbles, moans, and sings, of God. Its very commonplace holds the hem of his garment; the dust of its chronicles is the passing of his feet.

Whenever and by whomsoever written, the sea level of the Pentateuch is forever the concept of God. It was not accident that the first Genesis use of its documents should be one that mentions God more times than it has verses. "In the beginning God." As a lover with his own, it screams the only name. The book of Job, of like air with the Pentateuch, is also a gospel of God. That striking volume, Ecclesiastes, takes God and his commandments as "conclusion of the whole matter." The Psalms are songs to God. The Prophets, Major and Minor, are Prophets of God. "God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son." All human history is a desk of the Eternal. Ye "search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they that testify of me." To the Nazarene all Scripture was speech of God. One uses neither rhetoric nor faith to say the one thrill

of the Bible is its vision of God: plain truth answers. The world vogue of the Bible has no secret like the vast conviction that it is a word of God. God has a way of getting Bibles written, and one more is small venture.

With every emphasis on the Bible as a unit, however, it can never be overlooked that it is also a diversity, a combining, a compilation. The Bible is both a book and a library. Forty streams or more ran into its sea. Somewhere up among the hills a spring broke loose in the life of a man, and he must tell his tale. Out among the tides it was found there were tales. There had been more springs than one. There is not only a thrill of the Bible, but as truly there are thrills of the Bible. In the mind of each writer, or editor, and behind each output, was a master mood that by and by determined the deed. As we have seen, the Bible in the blaze of its thrill has neither master nor mate. It will be found incomparable in the light of its thrills. A clue to the various authorships has worth and charm, as surely as the key to their wedded handiwork. The Book will shine in its books.

The value of this suggestion we feel easily, for, as is often noted, in many cases the key is in the door. Not a few of the Bible writers say in so many words the things that were at their

heart. We begin where we neither study nor infer. We get first into rooms a blind man might enter. It will encourage us when by and by we find the key is lost.

The latest considerable book of the Bible is the Gospel of John. To modern thinking it is preeminently the soul of the Christian faith. Old age, wisdom, and holiness have small room for little but the inevitable. It is the young and foolish and unripened who see the great in the incidental. The utterly respectful estimate the earth has put upon the Gospel of John has had the best of reasons. The mightiest are the ones the gospel itself writes down. As none others, they interpret Christendom.

“And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.” “And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.”

We understand, of course, the rights of rhetoric. The world could hold the books, though even of such lives. The insistent fact is simply that John has no brain room left, even if it is so.

Everything he can think of is here. His heart keeps silent before God. The world is full of cradles, but to the latest mother there is but one. Through smiles and tears we swear that it is even so. "In the name of God, Amen." There is such a thing under the sun as losing patience with the truth. Of course the Lovers' Lanes of the planet are never lonely, but when one man and one woman come to know the neighbors are all dead, we get ready for the funeral. The family has a hard time getting on as it is. When the children of men are more certain their Bible is a very human book they will love it better. The heart of John, the Beloved of his Lord, could bear no more. To quiet the bounding pulses even of his eldest age he must write, and we get his Gospel.

The John of Revelation is an amanuensis. He writes what he is told to write. He takes dictation. His thrill is the line of duty. "The Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his Servant John: who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw." When we remember the puzzle box the book of Revelation has been, this claim of John to be simply a reporter means things.

God's world has been a puzzle box. Why might not God's Book be, just so, a puzzle box? The puzzle box is a matter of size and eyes. We shall see better later. The book of Revelation is a book of revelation. It was not built for a museum. It is a school. The face of Moses could not be looked upon that he had companied with God. That talking with God we do not hear well, always, is not at all a wonder. We shall learn to listen by and by. "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not."

The Gentile Luke, like John the apostle, also leaves his key in the door. He tells why he writes. "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye witnesses, and ministers of the word; it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed." In the Acts of the Apostles he professedly carries ahead the former treatise to his latest considerable recollection. One only needs to take the beloved physician at his word,

to know what masters him. He wears his heart on his sleeve. The thing on his soul is the credibility of the Christian faith. It is the theme of all he has to say.

The apostle Peter said of Paul that he wrote some things hard to understand. It was likely a matter of size. Paul never said it of himself. To his own mind Paul was everything other than nebulous, speculative, or mystical. One can usually find early exactly what he wants to say. "A servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God," all roads lead one way. His gospel of God fills the sky. That the faith of the Roman church is spoken of throughout the whole world, he thanks his God, through Jesus Christ. In Corinth he knows nothing, "save Jesus Christ, and him crucified: the power of God, and the wisdom of God." With the Galatians he marvels that they are so soon removed from the grace of God "unto another gospel." As to Colossæ he is an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God. He knows Philippi for its "fellowship in the gospel," "For God is my record." From the day of the Damascus road, writing, speaking, living, suffering, he knows no mastery but the gospel of God in Christ Jesus.

It is largely supposed that in Mark one finds the mind of Peter, and that Matthew builds his

message round it likewise. It is then all the more satisfying that we do not guess the trend of his thought. "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." So it is written. We know that to Mark the voice of God was the soul of life.

Matthew is plain historian. He has no Gospel beyond his facts. His world is a world of skeptics. He will put the hardest-headed, the most callous-hearted, entirely desperate unbeliever, up against quantities, that if he cannot overthrow them will grind him to powder. The divine Jesus of Mark is the historic Jesus of Matthew. As Mark is a Gospel of the Son of God, Matthew is a Gospel of the Son of Man. If future people come to think so marvelous a character is a myth, a fictional hero, he will find him standing riveted, cemented, built in, with his niche of the book of generations. He is Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham. "Fourteen generations from Abraham, fourteen generations from David, fourteen generations from Babylon," and Jesus who was called Christ was born.

No foundling Jesus is to burden his religion. The record shows that as to the world, gladly, proudly, Joseph and Mary are father and mother to a first-born child named Jesus. Having so begun, Matthew has now some

surprising things to tell. He must say that an unsuspected daughter of Israel is an object of shame, that her fiancé, an honorable man, runs risk of disgrace, that angels and dreams so move upon him that he takes the supposedly ruined girl to his heart and home, and that the whole stupefying transaction is a fulfillment of sacred prophecy, and the abiding will of God. Straightforwardly, he puts it all down. "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise." The visit of the Wise Men, the flight into Egypt, the murderous pogrom of Herod, the return to Nazareth, the ministry of John the Baptist, the dove and the voice from heaven, the irruption of miracles, the resurrection, the ascension, a thousand unbelievable things, are likewise to be believed with Matthew. Whatever we conclude, as to Matthew, they happened. His thrill was the magic of the truth.

As to other various and separate writings of the New Testament, they speak for themselves in every case as to their purpose and master mood and destination. The elect lady, and Gaius, and Philemon, Titus, and Timothy, get letters of their own, though shared with the neighbors. Jude, John in the first epistle, Peter, James, and the author of Hebrews, write generally and to large sections. The doubt as to who may have written Hebrews is still the

discussion of the scholars. There was likely the wisest of reasons why the key should not be handy. Whether the writers of the New Testament are eight or nine, we know not one of them wrote to be writing. A deep, controlling spell was upon them all. No one doubts that they were like other holy men of old, "moved of the Holy Ghost." The humanness of them all speaks all the more loudly. To be laborers with God, that is the opportunity and treasure of the race.

With every one of the Minor Prophets the thrill was in his message. It was a word of the Lord, a vision, a burden, something that came to him as from God. He was not his own. He was bought with a price. To Hosea and Jonah there was terror in it. Hosea must smother his ideals for the good of his people. Jonah must company with the grave. It is likely he actually died. It is of the day's work with prophets to take their lives in their hands. All worlds are home with him who speaks for God.

How far any prophet is the author of what bears his name is a matter to be studied. The man is commonly lost in the voice. Daniel speaks as the writer of his book, and yet it may be truly said that the thrill of Daniel is Daniel. His experiences are eloquence as certainly as his

words. It is thought by many that the whole book is about Daniel, rather than by him, as it is with the books of Job and Jonah. Ezekiel was in much like Moses, Ezra, Matthew, and Luke—plain historian; but in his latest chapters he sees visions, and is confessedly apocalyptic, telling as he has been told. Jeremiah, the man of many toils and persecutions, is constantly upheld by his thought that he speaks for God. As with no other writer, only the word of the Lord runs. That there are two or more authors who write Isaiah need hardly be longer questioned, but whether it is history, prophecy, or plain preaching there is no higher nor deeper sense of God anywhere in the entire Bible. Men are tools in startling fashion. “Hear, heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken.”

How much Solomon, the reputed wisest of men, may have actually written, no man knows. As all good stories during a generation were better for their being traced to Lincoln, so words of wisdom for centuries suggested Solomon. It is sufficient always to remember that deathless philosophy of the book of Ecclesiastes. “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.”

The Psalms are, of course, a book of songs.

Used in the Temple service, or current among the people, their intrinsic beauty and worth gave them their place. Each sings its own message.

Did Moses write the book of Job? Is it, with Genesis, a monument of those silent desert years when the chosen people went aside from the neighborhood of men to walk with God? Or is it a relic of that longer, later exile in Babylon? So great a book would call for a great setting, but we have only the book itself on which to build our concept. That tells us the ways of God with men, and that they may be utterly trusted. Whoever the author was, and whatever he wrote, his thrill was the wonder of life and the worthiness of God.

Probably Ezra was one of the greatest of the scribes who wrote for the Holy Scriptures. The historical books, at least, passed through his editing. Though Jeremiah and others possibly unknown were their writers, the records say the law and the prophets were touched with no uncertain hand by Ezra. The men who lay foundations will one day find their crown with those who fly the towers.

The human Moses is the victim of his fame. It was of such as he that, apart from their morality, the Greeks fashioned their gods. So deeply is he written into the annals of men that

the man is buried. The prophet, the legislator, the literary master, the leader of armies, the statesman, the patriarch, the saint, have made him a cult rather than a matter of red blood. That he appears on earth away from his heaven, in company again with the transfigured Son of God, we more nearly say our prayers than we think. We are sorely tempted to leave him with the veil upon his face.

But there is a human Moses. We see him, "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." We see him when come to years, "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God." We see him killing his man and hiding him in the sand. We see him weakened and worried with burdens beyond his strength. We see him laid to rest where "no man knoweth of his sepulcher unto this day." Under what a spell did such an one work, in writing words that will not die? There is but one answer. He had walked and talked with God till the divine will was life. For God he fought with the Egyptians, with his own people, with the elders and princes, with his best friends. There was nothing in the world for him but God. So being told that he is to write, we have volume after volume that, even edited, molds the world to-day. After some interpretation the words of Moses were Sinai to the Son of God,

and their shadow is rest. The thrill of Moses was his sense of God.

Do we follow the later critics and consider Moses as hero and soul of his economy rather than literally author or editor of its propaganda, we are the more amazed with his proportions. Priests, prophets, editors, redactors, long centuries after he is dead, can find nothing so worth doing as to hallow their work with his name. That he could so thrill his age must have been surely the magic of the thrill that in its toils so long held him. The vision of God is immortality. The vision of God is wings. The vision of God is eternal life.

That men have had their part, as men, in the book of God is the wisdom of God. They have their part in the world of God. But for men the fields run wild. But for men culture is a farce. Men are the solvent and interpretation of the earth. We know of nothing that looks immortal but man. Only of men is it stated that they are made in the image of God. Only for men has there been speech from Heaven. That the Bible has the finger print of men upon it we can read it. It is of like passion with ourselves. The Son of God was also the Son of man. The Book of God as wisely is the Book of Man. With man at its editing, the Bible reveals God as he could be seen in no other way. That we

feel the thrills of the Bible it is our own. It belongs. It is of the family.

“Bread of our souls whereon we feed,
True manna from on high,
Our guide and chart wherein we read
Of realms beyond the sky.”

BLUE MONDAY

There is such a thing under the sun as losing patience with the truth.

The mighty future is at rest if we are at rest. No age is on the way to save us from the age we have.

God's world has been a puzzle box. Why might not God's Word turn out a puzzle box? It is a matter of size.

That talking with God we do not always hear well is little wonder.

Men followed Jesus for loaves and fishes to find rebuke. Philanthropy is the religion of multitudes to the decay of piety and worship.

The heart of a cyclone is said to be so still as to be a terror.

The smoothest seas lie often long leagues from shore.

We need no sign-post to the sun.

No cripple could be a priest. Cripples did not write the Bible.

To a variety of minds the Bible is a glorified Sahara whose sands of equal value glisten as the gold. It is not at all disconcerting to such an one that in a diamond world diamonds are dust.

The Proverbs are a collection. They are the ages turned reporter.

The Book of God comes through in thrills as in the spectrum light breaks up in colors.

CHAPTER XI

THE REGNANT CHRIST

WERE one to say that Jesus of Nazareth is the riddle of his religion, there would be few to disagree. The conventional Christian experience, the problem of sin, the mazes of Divine Providence, the dream of immortality, are all simple to the problem of the Christ. This is not strange. It is mostly a matter of size. The largest concept entertainable of the human mind is God. Jesus Christ is an interpretation of God. That little people should find it collapsing is quite to be expected. Pantheism is hardly more than a jaded brain. It is a vacation to say that God is good, and good is God. Idolatry is simply a differentiating of the difficulty. One can more easily take on gods, one at a time. Necessity, Fate, Irresistible Causation are but creeds of the helpless. Men wilt and drift at vision of the issues. So in the magnitude of the matter even Bible teaching overwhelms. Revelation must itself be revealed. It is more than a witticism that

language conceals thought. The haunting notion that God could make things irresistibly plain if he would is a demand that he make us something other than we are. He might truly make us something different. It is not at all probable the different body would be better. It is quite likely that God does his best in the building of every man. That we reach the highest notch we may is but our day's work.

Jesus himself understood the "Messiah," to be a problem. "What think ye of Christ?" "If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?" Paul said, "Great is the mystery of godliness: God manifest in the flesh." So, frequent biblical answers to the riddle tell us there is a riddle.

Jesus may well be called the "Cultural Christ." A great business of life is to learn. "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent." "In the beginning was the Word." Jesus may also well be called the "Curative Christ." A great business of life is reconstruction. We cannot live simply to learn. We must also find help, salvation, correction. Life is both a school and a hospital. "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." Equally true is yet another thing. Life is not only a school,

a hospital; it is also a kingdom, a tribunal, a court. Jesus is the "Regnant Christ." "We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." Jesus is "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." We see here the old-time terminology of Jesus as Prophet, Priest, and King. It is entirely worthy as expressing the threefold aspect of life. It is misleading to consider life simply as to one or any of its phases. Only with all have we truly any. A life purely cultural is cold and formal. It is well to think, but man is more than a thinker. The basal error of Prussianism was just here. Head and hands outgrew the heart. The world went to war with a monstrosity. In the name of culture it did without a tremor things that shocked the earth. Jesus is a teacher, and yet other.

A life saturated only with the curative process of religion is out of plumb, crippled, morbid, and unhealthy. A hospital is a good place in which to stay. It is not a good place wherein to live. It is possible that Christianity has weakened its hold on men by overemphasis on sin and salvation. Jesus Christ is more than a Saviour. Sin is not the whole of life's shortcoming. There is also irresponsibility, ignorance, chaos, anarchy. Men must obey and serve as surely as learn, and be saved. The normal man is the

scholar, citizen, saint, and toiler, tempered into one.

In our latest thought the King is at a discount. Democracy holds the stage. It is well to remember, however, that the thing, and not the name, is the vital matter. Kings may go. What they rightly stand for, law, order, strength, obedience, duty, may abide forever. A family with love and no sense of obligation, collapses. A business with brains and small sense of honor goes bankrupt. A world of more than one man must get farther than doing right in its own eyes. Science is more correlation than knowledge. Art is fitness beyond shape and color. It is things in order that make them available. This is the secret of the latest century. Multiplication is rapid addition. One and one make more than two. One chases a thousand and two put ten thousand to flight. A small police force rules a great city. The first thousand dollars comes harder than the latest million. It is this dynamic worth we have in mind when speaking of the Regnant Christ. Names mean little. The things they stand for shape the universe.

A striking putting of this overturning conception is found in Paul's letter to the Romans. "To this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living." Except for this purpose also, there

would have been no Christ. The Christ came to heal, to serve, to teach, to atone, but to rule, as well. The Lordship of Jesus is of the philosophy of the incarnation. He is master of destinies.

Who can doubt the earth has great need of the notion of authority? One of the Czars is reported to have said, "My son and I are the only men in Russia who do not steal." A business man once said to the writer, "I would not graft, so put up with less money." The prices in the markets are always larger or uncertain because of speculation. The insistent demand for more government control in every nation on the earth is the mightiest sermon on honesty the world ever heard. Possibly a planetary army discipline was a school of the Almighty for better things. War teaches men to mind. The matter of the family is confessedly a thing of common concern. So vagrant are the passions of women and men that the call of right is often their only salvation. The excesses and horrors of war are a terrible correction. The sentimental droolings of the magazine, novel, theater, and free lance generally are shamed and mastered by the terrible logic of elemental distress and despair. In religion we are about at the lowest ebb as to free will in man. We may expect now a return

to the sweep of God's sovereignty. It seems so hard for the human race to be at home with more than one great concept at a time. Whether hard or easy, the demand of the hour is a resurrection of conscience. So we think wisely of Jesus as Lord, the Regnant Christ.

A peculiar emphasis of the Scriptures in this connection is that laid upon the passing importance of death. In ordinary human affairs physical decease is a terminal point. It is a distress and a disturbance, an enemy, a somewhat best to be ended. In view of the Lordship of Jesus, it is a transition. "None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living." To be alive or dead is important enough, but the mastery of Jesus is over both of them.

The relations of men and their neighbors are of large weight, but the controlling concept is not the neighbors but the Christ. No man living to himself and no man dying to himself has the great God in mind, and not the neighbors. Whether we live or die we are in account, not with the neighbors, but with the Lord. In

practical outworking piety is a larger affair than philanthropy or service. If the prayer meeting were the greatest gathering of the week, it would be entirely normal. To love one's neighbors comes second to loving God. The serving, teaching, or saving Christ is atrophied when there is no Regnant Christ.

It is surely and abundantly worth while that a minister should know where his strength is to be put. The very thing our modern religion is failing at should be our glory. The sense of God and his regnancy should be a great emphasis and message to men. We are teachers, entertainers, comforters, general managers, more than prophets. We should see that men do not forget the Regnant Christ.

BLUE MONDAY

The haunting notion that God could make things irresistibly plain if he would is a demand that he make us something other than we are. It is not at all probable that the different body would be better. It is quite likely that God does his best in the building of any man.

It is more than probable that Christendom has weakened its hold on men by over emphasis on sin and salvation. A hospital is a good place to stay. It is not a good place in which to live.

Science is correlation more than knowing things. Art is fitness beyond any shape and color. It is things in order that make them of use. One and one make more than two.

The call of the hour is a resurrection of conscience.

In practical outworking, piety outranks both philanthropy and service. When the prayer meeting is the commanding meeting of the week it is entirely normal.

Man is more than a thinker. The basal error of Prussianism was just here. Its head outgrew its heart. The world went to war with a monstrosity.

A world of more than one man must get farther than doing right in its own eyes.

CHAPTER XII

THE CURATIVE CHRIST

It is a universal failing to talk shop. And we talk shop because we think shop. The sick man chatters of his illness, the jail bird of his crimes, the merchant of his business. The machinist, mason, carpenter, discusses his trade. The artist is full of the statuary, building, painting, song. The farmer talks of crops and markets, the soldier of his battles, the sailor of the seven seas.

In all this there may be nothing vicious or reprehensible. The trouble is the world is our shop, and we are sure to get things out of proportion. The minister usually carries some sort of certificate that he is a bachelor, master, or doctor in arts. Could it always include the art of seeing things whole, the master art of life, it would multiply its value. Correlation is not a lost art. It is an art not yet acquired.

In the House of the Interpreter was a flame of mystery; a fire that would not go out though water rained upon it. When the pilgrim found

one hidden behind the flame pouring in oil, there was mystery no longer. He saw it as it was.

One of the mighty things about the Bible is its solidarity. It bears rarely well a reading whole. Its ends a thousand years apart, the work of forty or more authors, divided into sixty-six volumes, fashioned in a wide variety of dialects and languages, and out of an absolute medley of conditions, it is yet over all the earth one book. Had the Jews and early Christians read their Bible whole, the Christ could never have been rejected. Could Romanism have read its Bible whole, there would have been no occasion for the Reformation. The multiform denominations would merge into few, or none, did they read their Bible whole. Every cult taking the Bible as authority, would lose its peril did it learn to read its Bible whole. Reading the Bible whole will one day startle the planet into a following of the one Lord, one faith, one baptism.

The questionable Calvinism is simply the over emphasis of the sovereignty of God as against a free human will. The truth lies in the balance of both. The monk and the nun are only a strained concept of individualism. The truth is in a liberal collectivism. The Inquisition was a holy Christian zeal warped out of shape. The steady betterment of the earth in a

thousand ways grows from a larger action and reaction among the sections it will forever maintain. And reading the Bible whole, with the grace of God, will be the mighty tool to the final best for which men hope and pray.

These words are written to indicate the frame of mind in which one must consider the Curative Christ. That human life needs relief, that it is a hospital, we must sadly admit. There is distress and sin in plenty. But human life is not all a hospital. It is not mainly a hospital. It is not even largely a hospital. To think of the Curative Christ as the sun over half the horizon even, is to think out of all borders. If it were so that the need of the Curative Christ darkened so much of human life, we should have him and be glad for him. It was a great, good man who said, "My God shall supply all your need from his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." And we believe in that Christ. But with all said, who would live in a hospital? One stays in a hospital. He leaves when he thinks of living. Even the Curative Christ cannot make a hospital a home. When the cured man is made well he leaves his bed for others. A widely known philanthropist of the Pacific Coast founded an Old People's Home, and endowed it for long generations. She made her home on the grounds. But she lived in her own house. A hospital is an emergency.

To consider the whole of life as an emergency, or even dominantly an emergency, is surely not permanently thinkable. We cannot only begin to live when we die. Yet good and great men have thought within themselves that they must read their Bible so. Recent and authoritative statements of this diagnosis of man's journey under the sun read as follows: "Christianity above all else is a religion of redemption." "The church is a society of redemption." "The redemptive note is the dominant note in the life and work of Jesus." "May we not say of the Bible that the whole of it was written to show the person of the Redeemer, and to say the word, 'Redeemer'?" "The essential unity of the Bible is in its gradual unfolding of God's plan of redemption for the human race." "The incarnation in order to redemption has the same place in revealed theology that the creation has in natural theology. It is the very center of the system about which our lives revolve."

The worthy names that might be quoted as profoundly moved by a supposedly redemptive unity and dominance in all life command every respect. Nevertheless the Bible is an open page. We cannot build up any of its teachings with the debris of others. Its stated truths are no farther true than as built into the wall with every other truth. The failures and confusion

of Christian history are traceable more to a forgetting just here than to any one thing. . The brighter day at dawning everywhere is under a sun that remembers never less than all the truth.

Just because they loved their Lord his disciples would call down fire. That their love has become better correlated, religious persecution is at an end. Some truth gives room to all truth. The highest prayer of good men once was that an earthly kingdom might be restored. They find that true religion flourishes under any sort of kingdom. Good men once thought more loaves and fishes, and a release from disease and death, were of primary worth. They see to-day the hungry at the soul of him may have a feast, and a man may live though he is dead. As the alphabet loses itself to live in the finished volume, and the cradle ripens into manhood, so truth is mighty and prevails as coming to vision of all in sight. Left to our eyes, the planet is a plain. Brought to things as they are, it is a globe and whirls in its appointed orbit. So redemption, culture, mastery, providing, ethics, service are all true in life only as in sight of each other, and of the unifying will of the great God. We never see life really except as we see it whole.

It is easy to see how well-meant confusion

could come about should one read only the redemptive literature—those portions of the Holy Scriptures that deal with this side of the story. “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” “Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.” “God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.” “Thou . . . hast redeemed us to God.” “Thus saith the Lord, your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.” If this were the only sort of literature the Bible held, the case would be made out. But the rigid fact is that the Book of books is crowded with other sorts also, and we must think of them as well. “All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.” Here is the Creative Christ. “In him was life; and the life was the light of men.” Here is the Cultural Christ. “I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.” Here is the Hortatory Christ; Christ the Preacher. “Tell ye the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy King cometh.” Here is the Regnant Christ. “I am the Bread of life.” Here is the Sustaining Christ, the Providential Christ. “The Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Here is the deity of Christ. “The Son of man.” Here is the human Christ.

“I am the way, the truth, and the Life.” “I am the door of the sheep.” “I am the good shepherd.” “I am the resurrection.” “He will give you another Comforter.” As this riches in glory by Christ Jesus breaks upon us, like the high tides of the sea, we understand that to go alone with any one of its rarest treasures, the very sweetest and most precious, is at the expense of the truth. “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.” “Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.” We have no choice, can have no will, but to follow the Christ we find. We are to hold the Curative Christ as in keeping with all other aspects of his mission.

The probable fact is that no one phase of character in the Christ should be said to be dominant, or is dominant, in this world, or any other. One would not say eyes, ears, or hands were dominant. One would not say an ideal father, or mother, or husband, or wife, or sister, or brother, in a family was dominant. If dominant, we would not say ideal. One would not wish deliberately his intellect, emotions, or will should dominate. To have it so with either is trouble. Their strength is in their correlation. One great difference between men and their Maker is just here. No one of us but

is out of plumb, warped, gnarled, or dwarfed. God is infinitely perfect. And Jesus Christ is God manifest in the flesh.

It is not every discomfort among men that is subject of redemption. The infirmities of childhood are often unhappy enough, but we would not consider being redeemed from them, except as time and culture work their magic alchemy. There are many human shortcomings. We cannot wade through all forms of matter. We cannot fly. We cannot read thoughts. Physical death is quite a normal process. We do not think of being redeemed from such deficiencies—at least while under the sun. Temptation distresses. We are not redeemed from trial. Jesus was tried. Ignorance is an uncomfortable affair, gives one many a bad half-hour. Mistakes and blunders seem to be indigenous. The best of men commit them. So in the matter of scriptural redemption we go no farther than is written. We are redeemed from our sins. "He shall save his people from their sins." This means their guilt, penalty, defilement, enfeeblement, distress, and committal, as in measure each stated case demands or makes possible. We are quite often redeemed from danger. The Lord "redeemeth thy life from destruction." He "redeemed them from the hand of the enemy." In some measure men are

redeemed from temptation, and in temptation. He "will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able" to bear. Men are often redeemed from sickness and pain. Holiness is forever on the trail toward health. The one point to be made is that a careful study of the Bible will give us surely a vision of great things the Curative Christ will do for men. It is not needful to see too much. It is confusion to be wise above that which is written. Just what the Bible says is a marvelous plenty.

A final word of great consequence is that the Curative Christ gains by every other aspect of his character. That the redeeming Christ is all powerful is a strength to faith. That the Redeemer of men is all wise is comfort. Prosperity is sometimes ominous. That the Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel is very worth while. We are not saved because of favoritism, or any arbitrary or artificial reason. Only when it is wonderfully, absolutely right, do our sins vanish. "That he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." That our Saviour was incarnate he understands; that he is the Son of God he cannot fail. That he is the only Christ; that there is no other name under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved, we run to him at once. All other Saviours will be experiments and failures. It

is not at all in the interest of the redeeming Christ to forget there are a dozen other Christs. The greater he is every way, the greater he is in any way.

The earth is neither a shop, a hospital, a courtroom, nor a school. It is a shop, a hospital, a courtroom, and a school. Human life is neither evolution nor revolution. It is evolution and revolution. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." A redeeming Christ redeems to the end of the needful and possible. That our world might be vastly worse is good cheer. The Curative Christ is at once our study, our hope, and our joy.

BLUE MONDAY

One of the many mighty things about the Bible is its solidarity. It bears rarely well a reading whole.

To consider the whole of life an emergency is surely not permanently thinkable. We cannot begin to live only when we die.

We may not build up one Bible teaching with the debris of others. That only is true that shapes into the wall with every other truth.

Holiness is forever on the trail toward health.

The earth is neither shop, hospital, court nor school. It is shop, hospital, court, and school. The difference is planetary.

The minister usually carries some sort of certificate that he is a bachelor, master, or doctor in arts. Did it always include the art of seeing things whole, the master art of life, it would multiply its value.

Reading the Bible whole with the grace of God is the high road to the final best.

Some truth giving way to all truth is the sunrise of the earth.

CHAPTER XIII

THE SON OF THE CARPENTER

THE great God is a being of law and order. Chaos and confusion are forever alien to him with whom we have to do. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."

That the physical universe is under regulation is so obvious as to be commonplace. Disorder would be ruin. A watch and a grain of sand are poor neighbors. Watches do not run with sand. The world is not built to function with confusion.

The world of men is under law. God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." Humanity is a child of purpose. That men should seek and find the Lord is behind all their goings. What an astounding matter is the differentiation of the sexes! To this latest day it knows no sure control but the will of the Almighty. The

solidarity of the great races is much the same. Living often side by side with infinite possibilities of amalgamation, they persist. The institution of the family and the dominance of monogamy in the face of utterly violent temptation must have acquaintance with Omnipotence. Speaking largely, polygamy, as polyandry, has always been exceptional in the earth. More than one wife is rare even in Islam. The Christian family is the hope and the promise of a white life in the centuries to be. The institution of the Sabbath is law applied to time. Not only religion but perpetuity and progress call for system in the use of time. The Bible is another of God's thoughts in architecture. Its fixed record is court of appeal to failing memories and mental frailties. It is the anchor of all modern civilization. The Jewish people, with their unique and perplexing mission in the earth, have not happened. Neither did the Christian Church come to pass. They are both of the standardizing of the Eternal. They spell stability to the human race in a thousand ways.

From the foregoing it follows readily that Jesus as a revealer of God would leave behind him the print of his hands. It may even be more than incidental that he was "The Son of the Carpenter." With all we may say of

individual freedom the regnancy of principle, the dominance of motive and intent, Christianity and the Christ stand for human life according to law. Running water is the symbol of the free, but it runs neither long nor far till a channel hems it in, and it runs in order. Restless old ocean sleeps in its bed. Each star takes title to its orbit. So, the Christian religion has its chart of immortality, in its wedding with system and regulation. The kindly, revealing, atoning, Jesus, is also an organizing Jesus. We cannot follow him with small respect for the organic. He is the Son of the Carpenter.

Things did not happen at the cradle of the Christ. They were the "Fulfillment of the oath and covenant spoken of by the holy prophets since the world began." Joseph took Mary to wife, Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the flight was made to Egypt, the dwelling was had in Nazareth, "that it might be fulfilled." Life is a garment woven of a piece with all of us. It was emphatically so with Jesus of Nazareth. He was subject to his parents, he was about his Father's business in the Temple, he was baptized to fulfill all righteousness. His one answer in temptation was, "It is written." When he began to preach in Nazareth he at once identified his message with the Old-Testament Scriptures: "This day is this scrip-

ture fulfilled in your ears.” “I am not come to destroy but to fulfill.” So in all his ministry to the end. The history, ordinances, prophecies, and testimonies of all the holy ages are sacred to him.

With his formal work begun, he gathered about him a body of recognized disciples. He did not leave his message in air. Men were charged to follow. Discipleship is taken for granted, and its official ranking often forgotten. The day came when many of the Lord’s disciples went back and walked no more with him. He was so moved that he queried of those nearest him, “Will ye also go away?” One of the great duties of a Christian minister will be to forever insist that, if men will follow Jesus, they do it openly. The frequent distinction made between Christ and his church, his recognized fellowship, is quite unchristian. “He that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God.” “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” The weaknesses of the church are of the cross we carry. Jesus bore the vacillation, blundering, complaining, sinning of his followers. The great God bears forever the same cross. “The servant is not greater than his Lord.”

By and by, a chosen body of apostles

emerged. He called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles. Of the same nature was the sending out of the seventy. They went two and two. Combination is added to individual consecration. One and one make more than two.

Doubtless Christian organism has been over-rated and abused. Doubtless also it has been depreciated. Our Lord was not content with individualism. It is our mission as ministers to be organizers, and so perforce, perpetuators. We build to endure.

Prayer is an institution. "Men ought always to pray." "After this manner, pray ye." "Where prayer was wont to be made." The Lord's Supper is no incident. "This do in remembrance of me." Baptism is an institution. "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The Christian experience has a definite character often forgotten. It is a baptism with the Holy Ghost. Jesus performs it. "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." "He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." This was the significance of the giving of the Holy Ghost through the laying on of hands. It emphasized the official character. The Christian experience forever should be definitely recognized and conserved.

The great missions of the organic are two; weight of impact and perpetuity. The world has lately learned in blood and tears that men must stand together as well as stand. Government, law, order, training, system, preparedness will mean more for a thousand years to come because of these long days of ruin and alarm. Sin is divisive. Holiness is constructive. That Jesus is a voice, and more, spells immortality. A pile of brick disintegrates. A pyramid abides.

The Christian minister and man alike has his concrete task. He has no option but to bring the whole world into a visible organized relation to his gospel by as much as in him lies. He cannot wait while the world comes to him; he goes to the world. He has an open Bible in his hand. It is a word of God among other words. It is the word of God as being the will of God. He brings the duty and the privilege of the church, the sacraments, the ministry, the fellowship of the faithful, a daily life ordered by the precepts of Jesus the Christ. Being a Christian himself, he will make the last man Christian if he can. Even if made to appear narrow and illiberal, he carries with him a gospel of organism as certainly as a gospel of life. The good man, the Christian, is never an anarchist. Order and place, a local habitation

and a name, points of the compass, are forever of the day's work with him.

But now the hard fact is that the world will not wait till he comes. Men are born, and breathe, and live, and die, while he is on the way. The masses of the dead and gone never knew he started. His Bible, his church, his service, his hope, might never have been, so far as the vast majority of men are concerned. What has the Son of the Carpenter to do with the unevangelized world? Is Christianity the philosophy of the universe? Is it planetary or provincial?

The expected answer is that the Christian religion is professedly, unmistakably planetary. It was never or anywhere provincial. All men always have been settling the issues of destiny. There is a song built on the query, "Are you ready for the Judgment Day?" It is a pointless question. No man lives anywhere or for any time unready for the Judgment Day. He may not be ready for the closer company with God. He is forever ready for his account. God never left himself without witness. The most degraded heathen is without excuse. God is a Saviour for all men if not to all men. "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God." "God so loved the world." Some years ago there was held in Chicago a Parliament of

Religions. After a street definition of religion it was eminently proper. Naturalism, Judaism, Confucianism, Mohammedanism, Christianity—to the mind of history all are religions and may get together in conventions. As a matter of fact, one world with one God has room but for one religion. It is the work of the Son of the Carpenter.

Precisely this is the message of the whole Bible. The Christian religion draws a map of the universe. "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge." "Their words [are gone out] to the end of the world." "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold." "Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." The unevangelized are accounted with on the basis of the Christian evangel. "We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." "Before him shall be gathered all nations." There is no annex to the gospel. While knowledge and opportunity vary among men, the same vital element controls everywhere. The planet is elementally religious. No man lives anywhere or any time in an alien world. It is forever a gospel world.

Further, the people we are, as well as the world we are in, tells us of religion. Some one

has well said that "The human race is incurably religious." Our theology that men are born in sin and bred in iniquity does not displace the fact that they are also born and bred knowing the good. Natural religion is a basal teaching of our gospel and plainly of record in the Bible. We do not think of the unevangelized world as absolutely but comparatively unevangelized. They are children of our Father, brothers of ours, judged by the common gospel, varying degrees of which are the heritage of all men. They do not need another world, or more light, or even our light, to be evangelized in any absolute sense. The basis for missionary work is not emergency but duty and privilege. The tremendous advances of evangelism in these latest years are largely due to the broader scriptural views of what we are about, and how God is managing his affairs. The Son of the Carpenter has not been idle.

Never for one minute has the great God found it necessary to experiment with his world. He has steadily developed great, well-ordered plans in a strategy commensurate with himself. That his thoughts are not our thoughts, nor his ways our ways is only what we might expect. They take account of ebb as well as flow, of night as of day. That Eden, the Flood, Judaism, heathenism, Christendom, are mon-

uments of failure is a thousand miles from the truth. That the real work of evangelism begins only when Jesus comes again is delusion and libel. Evangelism is honoring God along every step of the way.

No man will largely succeed anywhere or at any time who takes a provincial view of God's world and God's work. That work has been planetary all the time and anywhere. That it has not been universal, a work in other worlds, no man can prove. It is at least planetary. The Son of the Carpenter is forever at his trade. His world is a shop, a field, a task.

BLUE MONDAY

Humanity is the child of purpose. "That they should seek the Lord."

The institution of the Sabbath is law applied to time. System in hours is not only religion, but perpetuity and progress.

Running water is the symbol of the free, but it runs neither long nor far till a channel hems it in, and it runs in order. Restless old ocean sleeps in its bed. Each star takes title to its orbit.

Life is a garment woven without seam for each of us.

The weaknesses of the church are of the cross we carry.

The world has lately learned in blood and tears that men must stand together as well as stand.

Sin is divisive. Holiness is constructive. A pile of bricks disintegrates. A pyramid abides.

The planet is elementally religious. No man lives anywhere or any time in an alien world.

CHAPTER XIV

THE DESPAIR OF PILATE

THAT Jesus of Nazareth was a likable one has its significance. The tale of the twelve-year-old boy leaves us sure the tenderest age is friendly with religion. It is probable the prevalent despair as to just this era among the little men is quite unnecessary. They are not exactly men, to be sure. It is their business to be boys. And there was a Jesus boy.

With every passing age the earth is to be more and more a world of scholars. Jesus looks well among the wise. One great Bible verse is better known and liked than any other, and it was spoken to a master in Israel.

One half the race is forever blessed in being feminine. It did not happen that white-souled women were at home with Jesus.

There is something queer in an age when men are not led of the Christ. The neighbors did not doubt his manliness twenty centuries ago.

It is a world of beauty and delight we live in. The birds of the air, the lilies of the field, the magic of sun and rain, the music of hymns, the caress of the winds, the lure and charm of

friendship and love were precious to the Son of the Carpenter.

That ministers should be likable is of their curriculum. There is no special piety in the disagreeable. To be drawn to the man is right of way to his message. The beauty of holiness has the best of authority. Though one may follow his model afar off, it is forever well to follow.

There is a higher vision, however, than the likable Christ. It is the faultless Christ. Our likes are of us. We are never exactly certain about them. But Jesus was ethically, as well as æsthetically, perfect. He is the absolute ideal. Pilate said, "I find no fault in this man." He himself said, "Who of you convinceth me of sin?" A voice from the skies declared, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." He was faultless in his reputation with his fellow men, faultless before full information, faultless with a perfect conscience, faultless before God. "Tempted in all points, yet without sin," is the word of Paul. He was faultless after trial. He was better than innocent. He was virtuous. In every thinkable fashion Jesus of Nazareth was the faultless Christ. Suspected as wicked, it is nevertheless of the Christian faith to find Him always good. The holiness of Christ is of his credentials.

It is significant that no sooner was Jesus baptized, officially installed at his work, than the temptation intervened. Full of the Holy Ghost, he was led to trial of the devil. There is among men no holiness untested. So that Jesus kept his first estate is not indifferent, incidental, nor a stage proceeding. It was of his day's work. The standpoint of the evil one was unrelieved wickedness. It often happens that the ignorance and defective reasoning of men lead to a misunderstanding of the Christ, and they think him mistaken and wrong. In the wilderness it is not weakness, but vindictive and utterly subtle wickedness that Jesus faces, and it is out of that he emerges the Faultless Christ. "Son of God, Saviour of the world, have a care for your comfort. Draw on the universe that you do not go hungry." For the mighty to waste himself on the little is the temptation. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Bread is only part of the equation. When the call of the hour is to be planetary, to be provincial falls into sin. "Son of God, compromise and conquer. The kingdoms of the world, the power and the glory of them sanctified to your use are yours if you will worship me." Anything that adulterates worship is sin. Holiness is wholeness. Men

are to do God's work in God's way or not at all. "Son of God, display your power, cast yourself down, that angels may care for you"—the sin of the short cut, the temptation of the spectacular. God has small use for the theatrical. He does not need to play at being either great or good. So in everything the wicked wish of the evil one went wrong, and Jesus was the Faultless Christ.

The Pharisees were very sure that Jesus and his disciples were frivolous, and kept doubtful company. "Why do ye not fast and make prayers more frequently? Why do ye eat with publicans and sinners?" In their mind, the most religious soul on earth did not have enough religion. Good people thought the best man the earth ever saw was bad. But was it ever so? Do not the sick need a physician? Is not the gospel good news? Jesus did not allow for one moment that he had in anything gone wrong, or even mistakenly. The scribes and Pharisees were finding fault with the faultless.

Again, the best of their day were entirely certain this new teacher was a Sabbath-breaker. "Why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful?" Like thousands in all the ages, they verily thought within themselves that particularity was piety. The noticeable thing is that Jesus insisted his conduct was forever

correct and right. David ate the shew-bread. The priests in the Temple do manual work on the Sabbath. A man is better than a sheep. It is always lawful to do well on the Sabbath day. The son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath. Jesus is still the Faultless Christ. "This fellow casts out devils by the prince of devils." He is in league with the wickedest potency in all the universe. "If I cast out devils by the prince of devils, how can his kingdom stand and by whom do your children cast them out? If I cast out devils by the spirit of God, then are you quarreling with God." When Jesus proceeds to designate these people as a generation of vipers, we know it was not ignorance or mistake but wickedness that prompted their action. They knew themselves at fault in baiting the Faultless Christ.

Sitting down to dine with a Pharisee, he does not ceremonially wash before eating. The objective is not as to cleanliness but godliness. Jesus points out that holiness is an inside affair, not an outside matter. It is the inward part that needs the washing. So they talk that they may accuse. The fault finder can always find fault. It is in this connection that Jesus says the leaven of the Pharisees is hypocrisy. They knew the right and still the wrong pursued. Had

they been true and honest they would not have condemned the guiltless. One must be good at heart to see the Faultless Christ.

The ruler of the synagogue by virtue of his office would be solicitous about the Sabbath day, and could not see any good in people coming for healing on that day. "If you will lead away an ox to watering on the Sabbath, ought not a daughter of Abraham eighteen years bound under the power of Satan be loosed of her bonds?" "And his adversaries were ashamed."

There are few more striking tales in history or fiction than the struggle of Pilate as to the Faultless Christ. Convinced that the evil lay with the accusers, Pilate would let him go free. "I find no fault in the man." Hearing that he is of Galilee, he sends him to Herod, who has jurisdiction in Galilee. Getting him back, he tells the chief priests he finds no fault in him, nor yet does Herod, and he will therefore chastise him and let him go. The chief priests storm to crucify him. "What evil hath he done?" says Pilate. His wife terrifies him with the story of her dream. He washes his hands of the matter. He puts the King of the Jews on the cross. To the bitter end he quarrels to keep on good terms with his conscience and his Lord. The Faultless One is his despair.

Another wondrous story is the attitude of the

crucified thieves. "If thou be Christ, save thyself and us." By and by a light breaks in on one of them and he declares, "This man hath done nothing amiss." Pilate at the extreme of earthly glory, and the thief in the depths of shame, have but one testimony of the Faultless Christ.

The confession of doubting Thomas, the penitence of the denying Peter, the tragic end of Judas the traitor, the cry of the Roman centurion, "Truly this was the Son of God," are all tributes to the Faultless Christ.

The persistent fiendishness with which the Jews again and again tried to put Jesus in the apparent wrong is seen in the case of the woman taken in adultery. It is adultery, a thing men talk about in whispers. It is the woman side of it; popularly the blackest. "She was taken in the act. The man, somehow is not here, but we have caught the woman. Now, Moses said, 'Stone her,' but what sayest thou?" How better could a white soul have met the whole miserable affair? Jesus writes on the ground. This business is their own affair, it is too base for him to touch except as he must. Let him without sin—let him who has never been just where this woman was caught—cast the first stone. The eldest, he to whom it was the most shameful, went out first, and every one

of them went with him. Then the woman, told she has been a sinner, probably deserving all she gets, is bidden to go and sin no more. How Jesus preserves the very air of purity, how he upholds both law and conscience, how he puts the lash on meanness, how he shows mercy to the weak, how he trains with the beaten! No wonder John remembers for three score years this vision of the Faultless Christ.

The minister as he is, his office and mission, is forever the worthy study of the minister. What more effective sidelight than to see himself as an ambassador of the Faultless Christ? He learns his pattern is the highest ideal, that a faultless one can never be less than God, that a faultless one will always have large mission among faulty men, that his whole heart's love may fasten on the perfect, that a thousand good things follow on this wondrous acquaintance with the Faultless Christ.

The herald of the Faultless is under bonds to the highest virtue, personally. Does he fail to thank God he is not as other men are, he will have a running start toward being the thing. Holiness bears poorly either bisection or dissection. The Christian and the holy man, as two men, have no insurable destiny. As one man they are immortal. A common Bible and hymn book name for a good man is plain

“saint.” That the minister should be saintly calls for no argument. Though in literal deed, probably, one man should be as holy as another, they who bear the vessels of the Lord above all men dare not wilt and fail. Prophets of light, they should walk in light. To talk about it less is to reach it sooner.

BLUE MONDAY

The beauty of holiness has the best of authority.

That ministers should be likable is of their curriculum. There is no especial piety in the disagreeable.

Our likes are of us. We are never exactly certain of them. Jesus was better than innocent. He was virtuous.

When the call of the hour is to be planetary, to be provincial falls into sin.

With every passing age the earth is to be more and more a world of scholars.

It did not happen that white-souled women were at home with Jesus.

There is something queer in an age when men are not led of the Christ.

God has small use for the theatrical. He does not need to play at being either great or good.

Thousands in all ages verily think within themselves that particularity is piety.

CHAPTER XV

THE BIBLE CHURCH

THE modern minister's work is with and through his Bible and his church. The Bible church is therefore to him a matter of perennial interest. It is more so that never was the church so under criticism. Indeed, a primary question is as to the discount of the church in our time and age. It has a variety of answers. Chief among them is the fact that the church has happily come to be the great organic exhibit of the good as against evil. The wickedness of the world has wit enough to find its foe. Slavery, intemperance, graft, deceit, thievery, murder, lust mobilize great armies. The church cannot complain at what goes with the job. Another obvious consideration is the inevitable weaknesses that run with the human stuff of the church. The church is built of men and not angels. Another factor is the frequent misconception of the church genius. Seeing is much a matter of eyes. The world expects what is often not of the church mission or message, and in its absence complains. Again, a changing and various environment has its effect. It is not

always easy to keep up with the times. The right thing often comes late. The church is confessedly in process. It is not built but building. Personal dereliction, ignorant or willful, or both, not rarely begets hard words, harmful even when defensible. "They know not what they do." It is probable that after all explaining the church will be a target. Criticism, like the poor, will be always with us.

In using the expression "The Bible church" we get automatically a definition of the church! It is the thing the Bible makes it. Stephen spoke of the "church in the wilderness." Judaism was a church. Jesus said he would build his church. Christendom is a church. The Spirit said things to the churches. As to the New Testament every formal aggregation of good men for aggressive goodness was of the church. There were other sheep not of their fold. They also were to be brought. Every soul the Christ touches for final good in all times and places is of his church. To every intent and purpose, a sincere formal concept of an organic goodness, anywhere or anyhow, is the Bible notion of the church. It may be called a discipleship, a family, a fold, a way, a kingdom, a people, a brotherhood, a house, the image of God, a doing well, grace in the eyes of the Lord, righteousness, worship, the salt of

the earth, the light of the world—names innumerable—but the concept of a formal organic goodness persists in all. Each separate title conveys a shade of meaning all its own. A fold, a family, a kingdom, righteousness, worship, all add something. The common denominator is an intelligent organized goodness. Something is shut out and something is shut in. Any institution standing formally for God and the good, as men are given to see the light, is the Bible notion of the church. Our article of religion specifying a visible church evidently dreams of the yet larger concept, the church invisible.

Unless Bible religion is to be tribal or provincial, ancient, mediæval, or modern, a thing of shreds and patches, a broad defining of the church, one reaching the planet in every age, is inevitable. A world religion must garment the world. Our eyes and hearts and hands must gather to themselves, not some good men, but all good men.

If Cain, the fratricide, in time does well, he is accepted. If Noah is the last one worth keeping, he will be kept. Abraham and Melchisedec alike are of God's order. Moses is not in Egypt for the Israelites alone. It does not happen that Jonah goes to Nineveh. Rome does not dominate the earth, even the chosen people, for

nothing; Grecian learning does not saturate mankind by accident; Cornelius, ready to worship a man, is still accepted with God. The rawest heathen under the sun is without excuse. He knew God. He had his chance with the Church of God. The altar in Athens was a seat of ignorant worship, but a seat of worship. An apostle of Jesus Christ declared there from the living God. To perceive that in every nation he that fears God and works righteousness is accepted with God may come late, but it must come. The order of Saint Peter must persist in spite of Peter. "God is no respecter of persons."

The well-intentioned man who will not link himself up with the Church of God refuses almost universally for some minor reason. Certain individuals are uncongenial. A local church is distasteful. The particular denomination is not attractive. The preacher does not please. This particular person should be shown he is divorcing himself from the ongoings of the universe. With everything distasteful, the truly good man will align himself with what stands formally for God in any locality. And be happy. "He that is not for me is against me." It usually happens that behind the declared intellectual disturbance is a self-will, proud in its isolation, that cannot follow a Jesus of the cross. As fearing God and working righteous-

ness Cornelius was in God's church. When baptized he merely sank deeper into the church. A missionary in heathen lands does not discredit or overlook any goodness that he finds. He builds upon it. Because one does not countenance Romanism, or Christian Science, or Premillennialism, that he has something better as a whole, he must not discredit the real and larger good that floats these aberrations. The wood and hay and stubble may not stand fire some day, but the gold and silver and precious stones will. The foundation carries far. Only "let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon." In a word, the Bible church is quite a larger matter than our usual dreams or definitions.

"For the love of God is broader
Than the measure of man's mind;
And the heart of the Eternal
Is most wonderfully kind."

With the Church of God, then in its essential essence coterminous with the human race, we have an intense interest in every Godward groping of mankind. Wherever idolatry covered a wicked lustful heart, it was wicked and lustful as everywhere other. Did it happen the god of one's hands, the brute, the breeze, the sun in his strength, was a stairway to a soul eager for

the best and better, it was worship. It is Bible doctrine that God looketh on the heart, that it is what goeth forth therefrom that defiles a man. That men should seek the Lord, feel after him and find him, though he be not far from any one of us, is religion anywhère, natural or revealed. There is something sacred in every soul on its knees. When the Moham-medan declares that there is one God, and prays to him early and late, to be a Moham-medan does not make this good thing evil. A hypocrite is a hypocrite in Turkey, Jerusalem or Rome. A true soul is a true soul anywhere and always. The pantheist did not automatically lose God in thinking him the sum total of all things. It was much of a Christian who said of us all, "In him we live, and move, and have our being." That God is good and good is God is not entirely happy, but neither is it totally astray. No man on earth can be guaranteed as having an absolutely correct theology. If he were so guaranteed, he might still be little the better. It is the deliberate slant of the soul toward the true and good that is of worth.

It should go, then, without saying, that the church is a precious thing to God. When one remembers the slight hold the church often has upon the world and upon the millions of its own, it is astounding to read what it means to the

Eternal Father. Were men and women in thousands to treat their families, their friends, their affairs as they do the church, their homes and business would be broken up, and they would be vagabonds among men. Yet the church is the Church of God. The church is purchased of God, "with his own blood." Jesus called it affectionately "My church," and said he would give good time to building it. The Holy Spirit talks with the churches. "Hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." Such as were being saved "The Lord added daily to the church." The man who neglected to hear the church was to be as an heathen man and publican. Christ loved the church and gave himself for it. He is the head of the body, which is the church. It is to be a glorious church. The names of this church of the first-born are written in Heaven. It is of the grievous sins that men should give "offense to the Church of God." How strange it looks and is, that literally millions thinking themselves Christians will not formally give their honor to the church! Other millions are utterly absurd and farcical in the actual help they are to the church, though of it and in it. Others rate it with their lodge, club, school, market, profession, trade, business, judged by their warmth of heart or expression. The church, precious

to God, is cheap to men. It would be a sad thing for the world did the Roman Catholic Church die overnight. It does overemphasize the church, but it emphasizes it. The lax church condition in Protestantism is in a measure the reaction from Romanism. The time may come when wise men and good will yet more largely respect the Pope. The church needs all its friends. Precious to God, it must be made dear to men.

The thought of God as related to the church is seen again in the evolution of the church. There is no church except as related to God. Jesus said he would found his church on a certain rock. The crude insistence of Romanism that Peter was that rock is a glaring weakness. No man can be foundation for the church. So Paul said, "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid which is Jesus Christ." That the dynamic of the gospel is an organic literal machine handed down without break is so artificial as to discredit itself. Organism is but a vehicle of life, a channel in which the river runs. The concept of the confession of Peter as the rock is a step nearer the truth but is still unsatisfactory. The human confession, indeed, is always in evidence. The man that believes the gospel so confesses before men and is confessed before the angels of heaven. But

the church is more than a fellowship or test of faith.

The long and wide discussion as to what "this rock" may be is really strange, almost uncanny. It seems so unnecessary. The mind of Jesus was intent upon what the world thought him to be. "Whom do men say that I am?" When Peter declared him "the Son of the living God," he was told nothing less than the revelation of the Father in heaven had made the declaration possible. God Almighty, making himself known to the world, is the Rock on which the world is forever building. God with us, Immanuel, is the hope of the earth. Not Peter, nor Peter's abstract confession, nor even the historic Christ, but the mighty fact that God will not keep to himself, is the base rock of the church, the soul of all religion. The visible universe, the inception of life, the superior life of men, the Bible, the incarnation, the spiritual experiences of the soul, the church are all the footprints of the Eternal. God is the great Fact in life. As we learn God, we build his church.

As in all other life, God builds his church in collaboration with men. The harvests of the earth are sown and garnered. Culture is the fruit of study. He that has friends has shown himself friendly. So the kingdom of heaven,

also opened with keys, gives up its treasures to the hands of men. There is a ministry of angels, but it is not the ministry of the gospel. That is the heritage of man. Here is the terrifying benediction of human freedom. Here is the slow march of righteousness in the earth. It is exactly the same as the slow march of science, art, commerce, the social order, and human comfort. Man's hand is on it and it crawls. There is no evident reason why God the Omnipotent might not have built the physical order of things in literally six days or in six ages. But with man on earth, the story changes. He is henceforth in bonds to human freedom.

God brought the animals to Adam to see what he might call them. God planted his garden, and for dressing and keeping calls in the gardener. God came down to see the city and the tower which the children of men builded. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" was the cry of the Son of man. The terror of human freedom was on him. It is one of the magic secrets of all history that God forsakes his creatures betimes and they walk alone. By and by they will run, and the earth will sing. The keys will not forever stick in the lock. Keys were made and were given to open with. It is a favorite premillennial teaching that the only hope of the world is the

second coming of the Lord. The first is a disappointment. But Jesus himself, who surely knows, and is a party at interest, says the keys of the kingdom of heaven are given to men. What they bind and loose on earth are bound and loosed in heaven. The hope of the earth is the faithfulness of the church.

As to the future of the church Jesus sees no doubt or fear. The gates of hell shall not prevail against it. To the Jews, Hades, or hell, was primarily collapse, ruin, helplessness, failure. There is no failure for the church. That the order of things incident to the first coming of Jesus will not save the world is squarely denied by the whole trend of the New Testament teaching. Premillennialism is a libel on the records of its Lord. "He must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet." "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner." "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." "Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, Behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of Hell and death." Yet this is the Lord that must come again, or there is no hope for the earth!

While perhaps pessimism as to the future of the church among good men is vastly more dangerous, yet a word is worth while as to the

expectations of men of the world. To them the very existence of evil is a reproach. Then, too, there is its persistence. Add to that its frequent dominance. Further, the Armageddon of the earth is not between black and white, but between gray and brown. Good people have their bad half hours, and bad people are often quite presentable. Evil is largely well dressed and comfortable while the good is not rarely in rags and hungry. It is a painful matter to the saints, and that the unregenerate sometimes consider God is nothing that they should serve him is hardly idiocy, to say the least.

The answers are numberless and ring with good cheer. Whatever happens, men are free; their evil is their fault, their good is virtue. God takes long time and wide spaces; the wrong and hard to haste and narrowness grows desirable when the whole issue stands revealed. In all the processes character is determined, and character is destiny. There is no waste, or "rubbish to the void," in any world. The love of God is magnified. The worst never happens. Even to the lost God is forever kind and good; the remainder of wrath is restrained; men never get the length of their rope. The very slowness of moral processes immortalizes their results. Slavery, drunkenness, lust, greed are the more hopelessly dead that they are long in dying.

Concretely, there were never so many people on the earth as to-day: the planet has been a fruitful kindly mother with all its miseries. With every bat-winged thing considered, the average of human longevity rises steadily. Womankind—toy, and tool, and trial, and tears—is queen and companion as in no other age. Childhood comes to years with a full life beyond all other days. Men were never at such premium in court, or church, or market, or school, or the records of history; democracy is hours beyond the sunrise. There was never the publicity of our age: men always right the wrong more readily as they know. Refinement is not the whole of religion, but that vice is driven to be respectable is of the dawn, under any sky. There was never so much everyday human comfort. Our poverty and distress sink all the deeper that we know the worst is behind.

The Church of God is not yet builded; it is in the building. The gates of hell look less and less like victors. Toil and sowing are forever heralds of the harvest. The school and lesson never fail to widen and deepen knowledge. It is surely a warped and twisted mind, if not a hard heart, that must insist the river will not reach the sea. Nothing other than this Church of God, the dwelling place of the Eternal, is the hope of the earth.

BLUE MONDAY

Any institution standing formally for God and the good as men are given to see the light is the Bible notion of the church.

The well-intentioned man who will not link himself up with the Church of God refuses almost universally for a very minor reason.

There is something sacred in a soul on its knees.

The church precious to God, is cheap to men.

God with us, Immanuel, is the hope of the earth.

The slow march of Religion is exactly the slow march of Science, Art, Commerce, the Social Order and Human Comfort. Man's hand is on it and it crawls.

It is of the magic secrets of all history that God forsakes his creatures betimes and they walk alone. By and by they will run and the earth will sing.

The worst never happens. Even to the lost God is forever good and kind.

The Church of God is the hope of the earth.

CHAPTER XVI

THE SEVEN CHURCHES

THAT the book of Revelation should be a manual of practical advice reads queerly when one remembers the chaos men make of it. "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass." "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." Whatever the Apocalypse may hold, it holds to be understood. Its native air is not fog but sunlight. The book of Revelation is a book of revelation. Its difficulties are troubles of size. The physical universe is so big it was only this morning that we began to chart it, or read it. The word of God carries a like burden with the world of God. "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." The trouble is ear trouble.

A further thing to be remembered is that the Revelation is an integral part of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The same Divine One who spoke his will in Galilee, and Judæa, and later to Saul

of Tarsus, now appears to John, the son of Zebedee. Whatever lesson we get from the Apocalypse is a lesson from the skies. Rational it is, but never rationalistic. Confessedly and inescapably it is a supernatural affair. The seven candlesticks, the golden girdle, the head and hair of snow, the eyes as a flame of fire, the voice as the sound of many waters, the face as the sun shining in its strength, are but attempts at sketching the majesty of the great God that little people might see. "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead." The supernatural is assumed in the book of Revelation. Perhaps it is the thing exactly the modern church may need. The supernatural is forever a dynamic.

As there cannot be a model minister, so there is no model church. It takes the good qualities of seven churches to throw in relief what any one church is to strive after. Seven with the Hebrew was completeness. "The seven churches which are in Asia," will give a rounded notion of the ideal church. This is the value of our study, as applied to the modern church life and task. Asia Minor is not so far away as to geography or chronology that we do not get great and wise lessons.

Strangely enough, the church at Ephesus may be classed as the Church Decadent. It was the church to which Paul wrote his won-

derful epistle, where both Apollos and he had long labored, where Aquila and Priscilla had lived, a church of great privilege. Yet it was here where men had left their first love, where a church might not be a church, where a church might die. How significant to read the things that keep a church alive!—works, patience, holiness, intelligence, persevering strength. The normal life of a church is an endurance, an overcoming. Too many churches do not take themselves seriously. Its best evidences are the epileptic drives, evangelistic, social, and financial, to which they must subject themselves. The steady labor without fainting is of the first works, to which there must be penitent return. The revival season is a snare. A financial fever is a contagion. It is he that overcomes that eats of the tree of life. Though decadent, Ephesus may regain her glory.

The message to the church at Smyrna emphasizes the earthly life and mission of Jesus. It was he that was dead and lived again who commands these things. A deified Christ must have been an historic Christ. Men may not say their prayers to a myth. How much this would mean to John! He sees his Apocalypse in the light of the three wonderful years. It is of a startling contingency to study exhaustively the four Gospels. Anyone who will

do it comes out absolute skeptic or good Christian. He breathes their air or dies of it.

Smyrna is the suffering church. Its tribulation, poverty, persecutions, fears are noteworthy. Its faithfulness was to be unto death. That is something other than until death. Chronology is not particularly of the virtues. Their comfort at Smyrna was that they were not to be hurt of a second death. He who could live again, having been dead, could see them through. Church success is not always the success of the church. If the church is a vehicle for its citizens to overcome, to escape the second death, it may itself collapse and disappear. The mothers are not few who die of their children. This is the glory often of first churches in growing communities. Their immortality is of the suburbs. It is the church invisible against which the gates of hell shall not prevail. To hold to a given organization in a hopeless situation is not necessary. To keep one's membership from moving, or sending their letters by freight, is doubtful wisdom. To be overproud of our denomination is a temptation. It may be an integral part of our mission to be high priests of failure. The way of the crown is the way of the cross.

Pergamos might have been called the Church

of the Holy Compromise. This is the significance of the "sharp sword with two edges." The sword is decision. Pergamos had in its fold certain Balaamites, and Nicolaitans, people who considered that they might be at once religious and licentious, if not licentious as religious. Good people who consider the world is getting worse, and the worst is yet to come, would better read again the story of the old-time heathen temple and its ritual. The infiltrations of religion with sexual passion at least have passed. It is a perennial sermon that in a day when it was on hand it was faced with a sword, clean-cut, decisive, against it. Men and women are not helpless in the grip of their loves. To say one is human is no end of argument. Men and women are to be holy in any temptation. Satan's throne may be in Pergamos. For his faith Antipas may die there. Their nearest neighbors may eat things sacrificed to idols, and careless and unashamed run riot. Nevertheless the good man is to overcome. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." A reckless, careless, trifling world, delighted to play with fire, needs still its royal souls who walk in white. It is not

certain but the modern struggle of religion is beyond all dreams a battle with the night.

Pergamos and Thyatira were hardly apart an hour's ride. The degradation of the one was the collapse of the other. There was little ahead in Thyatira but ruin. Its works and charity and service and patience and faith could not save it. "The Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire," could not long endure its vile debasement. He must witness things sacrificed to idols, and fornication was not only fallen into but was taught, taught by a woman, a prophetess, in the name of the Lord. In spite of warning it had gone on. So very soon there is to be great tribulation, and the churches are to know the Son of God is he who trieth the reins and hearts. The night is dark, but to anyone who will overcome there will be given the morning star, the shining of the better day. An impenitent church of Thyatira will be a perishing church in all the ages. A faithful soul may save itself in any environment.

The church in Sardis was the original dead church. He that had the seven spirits and the seven stars said that they had a name to live and were dead. The things which remained were ready to die. There were a few names in Sardis, a few individuals who had not defiled their garments, but the church was dead. There

were not ten left in Sodom. He that should overcome under such conditions was among all men worthy, and should be arrayed in white garments, and his name in no wise should be blotted out of the Book of Life, but should be confessed before the angels and the Father in Heaven. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." There may be such a thing as a dead church. No dead church can infect a man who is bound he will live. Even a dead church may live again. To know a dead church when one sees it is an art. To get it alive again is an art also.

The church in Philadelphia and the church at Smyrna were the only ones against which He that is holy and true found nothing to say. Of what sort may such a church be? It is a working church. It is not content with getting. It gives. It is faithful. Even under persecution it does not deny its Lord. It is a church beloved of God. It is a church of power, its enemies worship at its feet. It is an enduring church—has patience. It is a protected church—saved from trial coming on the whole earth. Its virtues are worthy of permanence. He that overcometh is to be a pillar in the temple of his God. He is to go out thence no more. The name of God, and of the City of God, are to be written upon him. Even in this changeful,

dying world there may be a live church fit for the commendation of God.

The word "Pharisaical" will satisfy many as a description of the church at Laodicea. "Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." As of Smyrna and Philadelphia, there was not a reproachful word, so of Laodicea there was not a good word said. The one only hopeful thing was that they might still repent. They might become something other than the thing they were. Because they were so certain of themselves it is the "Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God," that tells them they are utterly unthinkable and worthless. A church cannot live on its record. The riches of a church are in its virtues. The Lord Christ is outside a church of Pharisees. He stands at the door and knocks. There is no future for Laodicea but to let the Lord Christ in.

There is probably no needed lesson for the churches of our day that is not taught in these significant messages. If every variety is not found in seven, it would hardly be found in more. Each letter gets to its church by way of

its angel, the pastor or bishop. The ministry is a vital element in church life. A cheapened pastorate is trouble to the parish. Each message is of life or death value. Each message is an honest word. Whether good or bad, cheering or alarming, each church has the truth about itself. Each message is a word of hope, the worst may still become the best. That a church stands is no evidence that it is a church. Like Sardis, it may be walking around dead. Like Smyrna, its sufferings may be its pride. Like Laodicea, its pride may be its shame. Like Philadelphia, if not held fast, its crown may still be taken. Like Thyatira, it may not have salt enough to save it. Like Ephesus, its heart may chill in the work of its hands. Like Pergamos, it may be so politic as to be a peril. Whether a church is a church is forever its own affair. The help of the hills is with it, but only as it chooses. It is the common thought that churches happen. The truth is they are built. More foresight, culture, consecration, service, faith, dynamic, spells a church where before was hardly scaffolding. Churches generally are the work of the left hand. When the right hand functions, they will be of a better sort.

BLUE MONDAY

The physical universe is so big it was only this morning we began to chart it, or read it. The word of God carries a like burden with the world of God.

Seven, with the Hebrew, is completeness. The seven stars tell us there is no model minister. It takes the best of seven to make a model. It takes the best of seven churches to make a model church.

The revival season is a snare.

It is of a startling contingency to study the Gospels exhaustively. One comes out confirmed skeptic or good Christian. He breathes their air or dies of it.

The immortality of the First Church is of the suburbs. The mothers are not few who die of their children.

To keep one's membership from moving, or sending on their letters by freight, is doubtful wisdom. Babel was the harvest of the earth.

To be overproud of one's denomination is a temptation. It may be an integral part of one's mission to be high priest of failure.

A reckless, trifling world, delighted to play with fire, needs still its royal souls who walk in white.

CHAPTER XVII

AN UNCONVERTED PREACHER

WHAT an anomaly! We do not want to believe it. The thought is unwelcome. Yet, in a true commanding sense, such is the Bible introduction to Apollos.

One of the best, however. Not prosy but eloquent. Not lazy but fervent. Not an ignoramus but instructed. Whether poetical, rhetorical, or critical, still, "mighty in the Scriptures." If he had any doubt about the Pentateuch, or the Prophets, they did him no damage. "He spake boldly in the synagogue." Many a pulpit failure is heart failure. But Apollos was a heart success. He did not need power but a change. Not more heart but another sort. His train was on a siding. "Knowing only the baptism of John," he needed the baptism of the Holy Ghost. He was not ready to preach, as to Aquila and Priscilla, till he "knew the way of God more perfectly." To be taught, with him, was to learn. Immediately thereafter we find him "helping them much who had believed through grace; mightily

convincing the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ." Apollos as an unconverted preacher is still an Apollos without prejudice. As God gave him to see the light he walked therein.

Every converted man, like Apollos, learns the way of God more perfectly. Nicodemus knew quite a deal about the way of God as he came to Jesus by night. It had not gotten very deeply into her way of living, but the Samaritan woman evidently knew not a little about the way of God. The three thousand converts of the Day of Pentecost were already "devout men." Saul of Tarsus, to himself, was doing God service before his vision on the Damascus road. Preaching to raw heathen in Athens, Paul said, "Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." Of utterly degraded sinners, sinners whose record defiles the Bible, Paul says again, "They are without excuse: because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God." Conviction always precedes conversion. No sinner is an absolute stranger to the way of God. Every converted man, with Apollos, learns the way of God more perfectly.

It is a matter of prime importance that every minister shall have a clear philosophy of the moral world he lives in. No lawyer willingly

goes into a case with his client lying to him. No physician undervalues diagnosis. The empires of the planet have learned in a hard school, but are at last in love with preparedness. No minister is a minister who does not see clearly what he is about. Learning where conversion found Apollos, we know where it finds us all.

That Aquila and Priscilla brought into the life of Apollos some new thing is evident. What was that new thing? The normal answer would be that it is a simple case of New-Testament conversion. With the large number of accepted instances on record the Christian world has no trouble. The three thousand added to the Lord at Pentecost were converted. Later, the many who, "hearing the word of the Lord, believed," were converted. When "believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women," it was easily so many more conversions. When the number of disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly, and a great number of the priests "were obedient to the faith," their experience was conversion. So the eunuch, the Philippian jailer, Lydia, Saul of Tarsus, Cornelius and his company are considered commonly as having been converted. That the Samaritans, the Ephesians, the one hundred and twenty, and Apollos showed

certain variations, they have been given other classification, to no end but confusion. They were simply so many more New-Testament conversions added to the long roll of the conquests of the Lord. Apollos, like the Ephesians, "knowing only the baptism of John," is led like them into the baptism of the Holy Ghost, a common term for New-Testament conversion.

One trenchant reason for saying Apollos was an unconverted preacher when Aquila and Priscilla found him, is the intriguing character of Luke's writings. The most masterful penman of the New Testament is the author of the Acts of the Apostles and the Gospel bearing his name. No one whose contributions might be dropped out would be so great a loss as Luke. As to quantity, Paul wrote a trifle more. But the writings of Paul are letters sent to eleven destinations, and the subject matter, therefore, is repetitious. Luke was the first historian of Christendom, the Herodotus of the gospel. To say that "history repeats itself" is, in fact, only magnificent rhetoric. No event but has its day in court. To write events is rarely to run to brevity. Luke is the Bible artist in events. He probably put himself behind more happenings than any one author of God's great book. Any item he records is in great company.

It was the pride of Luke to write consecutively, "in order." This experience of Apollos is not a chance mention of a unique or peculiar experience. It is an integral part of a designed purpose in a master builder. It is said the conversion of the eunuch was the salvation of Africa. The conversion of Cornelius was salvation at play upon the Gentiles. So perhaps Greek scholarship and Hebrew mysticism are wedded in the conversion of Apollos. Alexandria, Athens, Jerusalem, and Rome are met in Ephesus. Apollos was particularly cosmopolitan, a citizen of the world. Great enough to rival Cephas and Paul, in Grecian Corinth men said, "I am of Apollos." Great scholars say that he was quite competent to the writing of the Epistle to the Hebrews. A paragraph to tell how he became a normal and model Christian was fitting, as it was fitting of Paul. There is nothing so reasonable as that it should be the story of his conversion. Confessedly, Luke writes the tale of many conversions. Why should Apollos stand as an exception?

Upon Luke's roll of beginnings is no one he so emphasized as the gift, or baptism, of the Holy Spirit. Not even Paul or John speaks of it so often, and no one nearly so much. Luke's writings might almost be called the Gospel of

the Holy Ghost. Now, as is well known, chapters and verses are a comparatively recent invention as to the Bible. When in the very next paragraph, with no break of thought or purpose, we find the instance of the Ephesians who knew only the baptism of John, we inevitably connect it with the case of Apollos. Knowing only the baptism of John, Apollos and the Ephesians must know the baptism of the Holy Spirit. That without this coming of the Spirit a man is in the flesh and none of Christ's, was the insistent teaching of this same Paul, and is the accepted truth of the whole New Testament. It is but another way of saying that Apollos was a preacher before he was converted.

This appears yet more conclusively when we remember that not only does Luke make repeated record of this experience, but it is the only distinct experience he does record. In Luke's writings one will find the common words, "converted," "justified," "sanctified," "forgiven," "repentance," "believed," "eternal life," and many others as applied to the influx of God to the human soul. His usual and favorite words, however, are in the terminology of the Holy Spirit. "Baptized with the Spirit," "gift of the Spirit," "filled with the Holy Ghost," "pouring out of the Holy Ghost,"

“falling of the Holy Ghost,” “receiving the Spirit” are his dominant turns of expression.

If one goes beyond a single crisis experience for a Christian, he cannot stop with two, in the multiplicity of terms. The only consistent interpretation is to read them all as varying phases of the one experience. The one great spiritual event all schools of thought have agreed upon is conversion, the new birth, that happens normally but once. When a distinct single uplift of soul comes to Apollos, without positive word to the contrary we dare not make it any other than the standardized conversion familiar to us all.

Because the word “conversion” is not used here of Apollos, we need not hesitate to face the inevitable conclusion, for our commonest word is the most uncommon Bible word. There are but one or two passages in the whole Bible where “conversion” (or any of its cognates) means exactly what we mean by it to-day. The whole number hardly exceed a dozen at the most. Paul and Barnabas, “declaring the conversion of the Gentiles,” speak our language. Conviction, repentance, faith, pardon, regeneration, the witness of the Spirit—all our familiar concepts—may be accepted here as in the word “conversion.” No other such passage may be found. By so much as New-Testament conver-

sion was of more novel or larger content than Old-Testament conversion, we cannot apply it accurately to Old-Testament terms, even when quoted in the New Testament. When Isaiah said, "Their eyes have they closed lest they should be converted and I should heal them," the dynamic is the healing. Conversion is conceived as preliminary. To us it is the whole transaction. When Peter said, "Repent ye therefore; and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out," conversion has the same content. It is a preliminary. The dynamic is the blotting out.

So, in yet other cases, conversion falls short of our common concept. "Conversion" to James was recovery from backsliding, and is modified by so much. In a word, "conversion" is hardly at all a Bible word for the initial Christian experience. That it is our most usual word must not blind us to what was usual to the Bible writers themselves. In using the terminology of the Holy Spirit, Luke was doing his usual thing in writing of conversion, the unusual thing to us. In the better time coming good men will read the Bible as it is written, and save themselves endless confusion. They will not divide into camps and cults over holiness, or religion, or Pentecost, or names of any sort, but will worship God in spirit and in truth

under every name. It will then occasion no distress to hear one talk of unconverted preachers. Apollos and John Wesley, if not one or two others, will be in great good company.

The simple fact is the Bible conversion is so dominant a thing that any word used to express it commonly means some partial phase of it. Like looking at the sun, it blinds us, and shows only a face at a time. Conversion connotes the idea of change. Regeneration is conversion as a new life. Justification is conversion as a right relation acquired. Sanctification is conversion as cleansing, a setting apart from the unclean, a proper condition acquired. Holiness is conversion lengthening over the years, a state as fruitage of an event. Pardon is conversion with the concrete sin in view. "Death to sin" is conversion as unmistakable severance from wrong. So with "crucifixion of the old man," "destruction of the body of sin." Conversion is never a compromise. The baptism of the Spirit, the gift of the Spirit, wherever ethical, is conversion wrought by and with the Holy Spirit. Conversion has perhaps a thousand names in the mighty Book of God, and no one of them tells the whole truth. Could all of them be found together, we could not face the whole truth. The pitiful divisions over special blessings are only a pathetic proof that being human, saints

sometimes go blind. Apollos, "Taught the way of God more perfectly," was led into a standardized New-Testament conversion. We do not libel him as having been an unconverted preacher.

A thing often forgotten is the epochal character of New-Testament conversion. Pentecost was cradle of an era. "I will pour out of my Spirit on all flesh, saith God, in the last days." "I indeed baptize you with water, He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him." "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, till ye be endued with power from on high." "As I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning." "Of which salvation, the prophets have inquired and searched diligently who prophesied of the grace that should come to you unto whom it was revealed that not unto themselves but unto you they did minister the things reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven, which things the angels desire to look into."

Could this wonderful benediction of a world era have been some special secondary affair which only a few especially good men here and there may attain or obtain? It is more likely

that nothing short of the one great blessing by which all men become sons of God is the fitting fulfillment. This one epochal experience interprets the signs and wonders of the apostolic age. As Jesus worked miracles, that he was a unique and new Person in the world, the Son of God, so tongues and gifts of healing testified to the advent of the Holy Spirit. This one epochal experience explains the tarrying in Jerusalem. It was worth it.

This one epochal experience justifies the care and emphasis of the early church in its projection and statement. The first sermon at Pentecost offered the gift of the Holy Spirit to the penitent sinners at Jerusalem. Philip carried it to Samaria. Peter and John prayed and laid on hands that men might have it. Ananias said to Saul of Tarsus, "Jesus hath sent me that thou mightest be filled with the Holy Ghost." Cornelius and his household were given the "falling of the Holy Ghost." Paul would not be content until the Ephesians who had not heard of such a thing should "receive the Holy Ghost." Aquila and Priscilla would not let Apollos preach longer till he knew this something larger than the baptism of John.

This one epochal experience explains the ethical situation of saved men before Pentecost. "Were not the disciples converted before

Pentecost?" Certainly, with the conversion attainable in their day: as the eunuch was converted before he met Philip; as Cornelius was converted before Peter crossed his path; as the Ephesians were converted before Paul's questioning; as Apollos was converted before the impertinence of Aquila and Priscilla. In all these cases it was being "Taught the way of God more perfectly," the going on to a greater conversion. It was eminently fitting that these souls, so near the Kingdom, should be led into the full experience they were to preach. They would then be examples of their own preaching.

The same Bible that said Cornelius was accepted of God said also he was yet to be saved. The same Bible that said Jerusalem was crowded with devout men said likewise they were to receive the Holy Ghost, without which men are in the flesh and none of Christ's. The same Bible that said Paul was void of offense toward God and men, said he still needed to receive the Holy Ghost. So the Ephesians, measured by John's baptism, are converted; measured by Paul's question, they are unconverted. So Apollos, measured by John the Baptist, is converted; measured by Aquila and Priscilla, he is unconverted. This is what Jesus meant when he said, "Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a

greater than John the Baptist, notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." This is what Peter meant when he wrote, "The Spirit testified of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."

What we call the Christian experience has a greater content since Pentecost. It has a distinctly stated epochal character. The whole second blessing propaganda in all the denominations has sprung from misinterpretation just here. It has not discerned the epochal variation brought with Pentecost. To the evangelized generation living through the transition it might be truly said there came to them a second blessing, an enlargement of what they had. With every one coming later, the God revealing was, as from the beginning, always unitary. "Though the apostles before the Pentecost were holy after the less perfect dispensation of Moses, and so heirs of heaven, it was by this outpouring that they were wrought to the higher and doubtless highest dispensation of the Spirit." What Doctor Daniel Whedon has so well written of the apostles is the succinct statement of the situation affecting every genuine Jewish convert happening to live during the current Pentecost generation. They learned the way of God more perfectly. Speaking

popularly, to them it was a second blessing. Making it the standard for all time and all men can lead to nothing but unrest.

The Christian experience as to the Scriptures is fundamentally unitary. It is never bisected except at needless cost. The matter is clearly stated by Docter W. F. Tillett,¹ of Vanderbilt University, in the following language: "Personal salvation is not so much a complex thing or a compound thing, or many things, as it is one thing. Spiritual life manifests itself in many ways, but it is essentially in itself a unit." "Not diversity but unity therefore is the great law, the fundamental principle of spiritual life." "Repentance, faith, righteousness, sonship, holiness, are not so much different things which together constitute salvation as they are different ways of looking at or setting forth one and the self same thing—spiritual life." "Personal salvation is divinely imparted spiritual life, and this, as we have seen, is an indivisible unit, not a compound of many things." "If it be true therefore that the Bible warrants the foregoing analysis of salvation into distinct and separate elements, it is also true that the Bible in many places utterly ignores its own distinctions and speaks now of repentance as if

¹ *Personal Salvation*, Lamar & Barton, agents, publishers, Nashville, Tenn.

it were the whole of salvation, and now again of faith as if it were the whole of salvation, and now again of righteousness, or regeneration, or holiness, as if they were severally the essence of salvation.” “Holiness is not so much an element of salvation, or a special experience of some of the saved, as it is religion itself; it is but another designation of personal salvation which, though manifold, is yet a unit.”

Of course the concrete conclusion writes itself. If a preacher unconverted may not rest content, so neither may any man. There is no more vital question than to learn the way of God more perfectly. Apollos is an example for the race. Like all ministers, he runs before his ministry.

BLUE MONDAY

Every converted man, like Apollos, learns the way of God more perfectly. Conviction inevitably precedes conversion.

It is a matter of prime importance that every minister shall have a clear philosophy of his moral world.

No one whose contributions might be dropped out of the New Testament would be so great a loss as Luke.

Chapters and verses are a comparatively recent invention as to the Bible.

There are hardly more than one or two passages in the whole Bible where "conversion" (or any of its cognates) means precisely what we mean by it to-day.

Bible conversion is so dominant a matter that any word used to express it means commonly some partial phase of it.

Conversion has perhaps a thousand definitions in the Book of God, and no one of them tells the whole truth.

Pentecost was the cradle of an era.

The Christian experience as to the Scriptures is fundamentally unitary. It is never bisected except at needless cost.

CHAPTER XVIII

EVANGELISM

To many minds, the extensive or intensive side of things is an academic affair. It is like rehearsal of the play, or the walking for exercise; wise and useful probably, but negligible. As a matter of fact, it is incurably practical. The atmosphere garments the planet. Its composition and currents determine daily life. The pair of lungs we carry, however, is no less vital. Do they not function, we die. The garnering of the harvest is a stupendous affair. An ill-ordered stomach makes it useless. Seeing is astoundingly a matter of eyes. The extensive and intensive are of the market and the street.

In all ages, religion has suffered from its narrowness. Out in the world there are temptations. Therefore, asceticism. Certain besetments are found only in the married life. Therefore the monk and the nun. Piety and brains are not always good neighbors, and Voltaire could say that "Ignorance is the mother of devotion." The wrestle of conscience is often tortuous and takes time. Therefore, the Papacy, the State Church, the Inquisition,

Christian Science, and Premillennialism. The greatest evangelist of recent times insists that God is not trying to save the world as matters are. With the Second Coming things will happen. For a time the Almighty works with his left hand. So the truth may be an enemy of the whole truth. As if God could be God and soldier, waste good time, wait only his own good pleasure.

The fact is an evangelism as wide and deep as the world, and as high and strong as God, is always needed to save the world, or save God to the world. Exactly that, and nothing less, is Bible evangelism. God is never with us, but at his best.

Nothing less than the physical universe is one of God's evangelists. "In the beginning was the Word." God spoke in what he did. The heavens declare his glory. Rain and fruitful season are his witnesses. The lilies of the field, the birds of the air, the stars in the sky are more than rhetoric. Except as to its sin the very universe is evangelistic.

The course of human events is evangelistic. Nations have no souls, but God takes note of nations, tribes, and tongues. For something, every people is a chosen people. Their times and places of habitation are of the foresight of the Eternal.

“God setteth the solitary in families.” A family has no soul. All families attenuate till lost to segregation, or fixity, as sand in the desert, or rivers in the sea, but God takes note of families. Families do not happen. God goes to weddings. He is never nearer than at the cradle. The temerity with which men and women dictate and deflect the family life is not one of the lesser evils of the planet. The passion of human love is essentially pious. And men and women are few who soon or late are not mastered thereby. The conservation of the family has been of the mighty mission of Christendom and Judaism alike. That marriages are not made in heaven is one of the startling messages of the Book of books. The ready reflection is that the family has unique significance in the earth. It is another of God’s evangelists.

The evangelistic economy of the crowd is not to be forgotten. Humanity falls into races. The chosen people were segregated into tribes. In the desert a whole generation was taught a lesson of unity and solidarity. Who will say one inscrutable reason for a divine permission of the Great War was not the writing in blood and tears the solidarity of the human race? It was God’s policing of anarchy. It was leading to a league of nations, a Washington World Con-

ference. The bringing together of the Jews in feasts and assemblies was the cradle of Pentecost. The three thousand were so many missionaries. John the Baptist gathered crowds. Jesus called the multitudes. Our great inter-church affairs have their purpose. God sets his lights on candlesticks, and his cities on hills. The crowd is of God's evangels.

Miracles are of extensive evangelism. Men were never saved by them. They were wrought that the earth might know that God was around. "That ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thine house." Rushing winds and tongues of fire were not vital matters, while vital matters rode upon their wings. The attempt to make bodily healings an integral part of true evangelism will always fail. They never were. They are forever secondary and incidental.

Another of God's evangelists is the church. The relative discount put upon it, often with the best intentions, is not warranted by the Scriptures. "The Church in the Wilderness" is a name for the whole Jewish economy at one time. Jesus said he would build his church and the gates of hell should not prevail against it. The Holy Spirit sent messages to the churches.

The apostles wrote epistles to the churches. The church is the Church of God. Heaven is the church of the first born. Whatever relative interpretation we may make of the church, it is forever to be kept at a premium in our estimate.

The Bible is one of God's evangelists. To be sure, there are more people in heaven who never saw a Bible than have gone there by its teachings. Also the world got on practically without a Bible for two thirds of its history. Also it is a small minority indeed that has ever been mastered by its presence. Nevertheless its mission, in the providence of God, is ever of the highest. God does not leave his kingdom to memory and tradition. It is also enriched by the Book of books. Moses wrote of the Son of God. The writings of the apostles are known as Scriptures. Holy men of old wrote as they were moved of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said the Scriptures testified of him, and that in them men found eternal life. The day of the Bible is only at sunrise among men. It is to know no night.

With many the ministry is supposed to be a quarter section of the church. It is wiser to consider it as of itself. The personal element forever outranks the organic. Man as made in the image of God is transcendent. So patriarchs,

prophets, priests, ministers, apostles, evangelists, teachers are of God's right hand. No church rightly ordains one who has not been first ordained of God. So, however closely knit in church economy the living ministry may be, it has room of its own. It takes orders of the Eternal.

There is, of course, no intensive evangelism independent of the extensive. The physical universe, Providence, the Bible, the church, the ministry, in their measure must go and speak. We know the soul only through the body. "How shall they hear without a preacher?" Here lies the mission of all religious machinery. The speaker, the music, the crowd, the methods, all are preachers. The earthquake, wind and fire have their place and purpose for the still small voice. Intensive evangelism is the flame, and light, and heat, and power, for which dynamo, pole, and wire have being. Intensive evangelism is the ripe red fruit for which tree and soil, and sun and rain, have learned to labor and to wait. Intensive evangelism is that firing line where one man fights that there are six other men to get him there and have him ready. Extensive evangelism is largely tentative. Intensive evangelism is inevitable.

What vast concerns, for instance, lie within the province of conscience? Noisy Pharisees

wilt and fade under its lash. Pilate's wife is driven by a dream. The Gentiles having no law are a law unto themselves. Nicodemus, coming by night is at the lure of the elemental. Nathanael under the fig tree, alone, is seen of his Lord. Every man under the sun, as if there were no other body on earth, does business with God. It is just this phase of revival effort that is neglected in our modern day. We all too rarely trust a man alone with his conscience. The conviction a man can shake off will not often convert him. It may get him up the sawdust trail, or to some altar, or to join some church, or even to turn wonderfully fussy at religion. It will rarely get him converted. No man gets converted till he is mastered, till in his heart Jesus is Lord, till he is born again, born of God. All too many Christians are living without life. The way good people can keep deaf and dumb and blind with God Almighty in their souls is ominous. They look so dead. The great masses of all New-Testament converts, till Gentilism was invaded, were professedly good people. When the train load of soldier laddies pulled away the bands were wont to play that they might not think too much. In evangelism that is not good ethics. To stand in the presence of God is a thing to think about: with foot unshod and head uncovered. "The

ground whereon thou standest is holy ground."

Intensive evangelism finds its play in personal work. It is a battle where one fights it out with himself, and where he fights it often with another. There is usually none but the most elemental work on hand when it is one and one. The Scripture word about the two or three gathering together in one sacred name is hardly intended for small meetings that justly should be big. It is, rather, a sermon on the worth of small meetings that justly should stay small. "Adam, where art thou?" "David, king of Israel, thou art the man." "Nicodemus, a man must be born again." "Woman of Samaria, thou hast had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband." The one hundred and twenty, and the three thousand, and the five thousand, were named as being each one worth counting. The eunuch, the jailer, Lydia, Cornelius, Saul of Tarsus, Apollos, the twelve charter members at Ephesus all emphasize the asset there is in one man. The decay of testimony, anywhere, is a sign of an underrating of one man-values.

Intensive evangelism is illustrated in the local church. It is more than probable that the interdenominational, commonwealth, municipal idea in evangelism is overdone. The tie

is too loose. The talking about things; the crush of inexperienced committees; the crowd instead of the Christ; the meeting as against its purpose; the battle against time; the hoarse, wornout, professionalized evangelist—if the local church would stand or fall with a genuine revival, much of these artificial weaknesses would be avoided, and the real task would be better done. “Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.”

Intensive evangelism finds its play in an insistence upon a satisfying, mastering, individual experience. John the Baptist had great crowds, an ecclesiastical machine, a ritual, a system of ethics, a concrete purpose and mission. They were each and all but heralds to the baptism with the Holy Ghost. The children of Abraham might all stay vipers did they stop short of the fan and flame. Our modern day saves its face by insisting the gift of the Holy Spirit is an annex to conversion, a baptism for service, a reconsecration, an entire sanctification, as against something immature and partial. In the New Testament the Spirit baptism, gift, indwelling, birth, witness, are primary, fundamental, vital. “If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” The evangelistic peril of our day is a Christendom quite content with the baptism of John.

We are told that as Jesus held true to this high ideal of evangelism, "Many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." They did not slide back. They went back. When loaves and fishes ran out, when the Rabbi would not be ruler, when a profound experience within, and self-denying service without, was mandatory, they went back. Jesus was not sure even of his twelve apostles. They might also go away. One of them did. Apollos got converted. Judas never did. We follow either Judas or Apollos. "And I saw there was a way to hell from the very gates of heaven." In any age there is nothing to take the place of being, getting, keeping right with God. To churn up large enthusiasm over anything else is to miss entirely the Bible emphasis. To specialize religion is to belittle it. It is of the warp and woof of life; woven without seam. Here is the intensive evangelism.

The practical lessons drawn from this survey of evangelism are voluminous. The physical universe, Providence "miracles" the empires of men, the church, the Bible, the ministry, as God's evangelists, is an enormous beginning to our thinking. That they end nowhere and never but at the complete, willing, joyous surrender of the soul to the will of God, or its wandering into a hopeless night, gives life its

significance, its terror, its delight. It is goodness, not evil, that has the run of the house. Sin is sneak and porch-climber in the earth. How could a minister be put to it for something to say, and how be other than aggressive, how be ignorant, narrow or conventional? Life is so eloquent, alarming, kindly, all the Lord's people would be prophets, it would seem. And here is one asleep on the top of a mast.

BLUE MONDAY

The truth may be the enemy of the whole truth. That we are the people and wisdom will die with us is an unlikely proposition in any age. The modesty of ignorance is forever a desirable virtue.

An evangelism as wide and deep as the world, and as high and strong as God, is always needed to save the world, or save God to the world. Exactly that is Bible evangelism.

A family has no soul. All families attenuate till lost to segregation or fixity as sand in the desert or rivers in the sea. Yet God takes note of families. Families do not happen. "God setteth the solitary in families."

The attempt to make bodily healings an integral part of true evangelism will always fail. They never were. They are forever secondary, temporary, and incidental.

The conviction a man can shake off will rarely convert him. To be converted is to be mastered.

The way good people can keep deaf, and dumb, and blind, with God Almighty in their souls, is ominous. They look so dead.

When the trainloads of soldier laddies pulled away, the bands were wont to play that they might not think too much. In evangelism that is not good ethics.

The evangelistic peril of our day is a Christendom quite content with the baptism of John.

CHAPTER XIX

THE POSTHUMOUS GOSPEL

THE gospel of Jesus did not end when he was dead. It did not end with his ascending. It did not even end with Pentecost. It did not end with the third heavens that Paul saw. It did not end with the wonder of Patmos. It did not end with a unified Bible. It did not end with a diversified church. It does not end with political, social, economic, comfort in the earth. It does not end with democracy. It ends only when men are guided into all truth. While they can bear them, and as they can bear them, Jesus has things to say. He said there were many things. It looks suspiciously as if a matter like that might be immortal. "Of his kingdom there shall be no end." The glory of sunrise has a fame with men, because their eyes can take it in. The blaze of noon is blinding. With better eyes we may one day see the dawn has business only as it leads to day. The gospel of Jesus did not end when he was dead.

Unwittingly the incarnate Jesus is with quite too many the enemy of the real Jesus. The Son of man shadows the Son of God. That the

Nazarene went away, sorrow filled the hearts of his best friends. That he stays away, his religion is a memory to millions. That he comes again is confessedly the only substantial hope of the great and good in pitifully surprising numbers. Their name is Thomas. They will believe, but only with the print of the nail.

“I think when I read that sweet story of old,
When Jesus was here among men,
How he took little children as lambs to his fold;
I should like to have been with him then.”

Did the sentiment, sweet to tears, end with the music, one might wait in silence. But with a better Jesus just here, his hand on our head, and his peace unspeakable at heart of us, it is not far from waste. A Jesus one worships is surely nearer than a Jesus one remembers. A Jesus who opens the holy writings till our hearts burn within us is not a Jesus whose absence is to be mourned. A Jesus whose going away is more expedient than his abiding should be taken at his word, to an end of distress. The real man is the man of the soul. The real Jesus is the Divine One, to whom the incarnation was an incident and the historic gospel a phase of the passing years. Time and space and circumstance have a way of fading, does one walk with God.

The Jesus of the resurrection is the abiding Jesus. The supposedly nine times he appeared before the ascension were, every one of them, matters of choice. The normal Jesus is the hidden Jesus. His appearance to Saul of Tarsus was a choice. His appearance to John in Patmos was his choice. Should he unmistakably appear again, it would be that he so chooses. It will be his joy to appear at the climax of all ages, the end of the world. The Jesus of the resurrection is our Jesus. We worship him as did those who saw him with their physical eyes. Our hearts burn as he talks to us by the way, even as it was with the travelers to Emmaus. He sends us about our duties as he directed Peter to feed the lambs. He orders our lives as he willed that John should tarry till he came. If, like the son of Jonas, we glorify God by dying, or, like the son of Zebedee, we tarry to meet him at some Patmos, it is his affair. He cared whether his children had any meat. He is not careless that we dine. As he knew Mary and stilled her weeping he quiets us. As peace was in his sending of his disciples so our way of duty is the way of blessing. It is a loss immeasurable when good men shade their sense of an ever-living Christ for a dream of a Christ to come. Not rarely they lose their vision of any Christ. It is neither

in a mountain nor in Jerusalem that men worship God. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Adventism is a ready road to ruin, a Bypath Meadow, for pilgrims not a few. The gospel of Jesus did not end when he was dead.

If anything is plain in Scripture, it is that Pentecost, and the things it stands for, was speech of Jesus. In some farreaching sense Pentecost could not be, the Holy Spirit could not come, till Jesus went away. "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." "I indeed baptize you with water, but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." "This Jesus hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." The Posthumous Gospel includes the mission of the Holy Spirit. The deity of Jesus Christ has no credential to surpass it. The Sermon on the Mount is famous. The Sermon of the Upper Room is yet more famous. The Sermon of the Holy Spirit is immortal.

This compelling generalization is in no sense a matter of inference or discovery. It is a simple Scripture statement. "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you." "The Son of God is come." "He shall not speak of himself; . . . he shall glorify me: for he shall

receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.” “They took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus.” “When it pleased God to reveal his Son in me, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood.” The gospel of the Holy Ghost is the gospel of Jesus. The accent of the last half century on the terminology of the Holy Spirit brought no new thing whatever. It simply deepened, widened, flew, the gospel of God which is the gospel of Jesus. “I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forever more, Amen.” The things men could not bear when Jesus was on the earth, matters reaching the limits of all truth, are to be uncovered under the sun forever. The gospel of Jesus was not completed with his historic life. He preaches to the end of time.

The revelation of Patmos is of the Posthumous Gospel. The voice John heard behind him, as the voice of many waters, was the voice of Jesus. As he appeared to his disciples after the resurrection, even to five hundred brethren at one time, so now he speaks again to the son of Zebedee. The marvelous imagery of the Apocalypse should not blind us to the literal truth that the Son of God once more revealed himself. It is probable that the wealth of the unusual was for the very purpose of confirming the reality of the supernatural spiritual world.

It is unmistakably a different world. No wiser way seems open than to give it a different, if astounding, expression. Eyes as flames of fire, voices as the sound of a trumpet, candlesticks and stars, seals, vials, great beasts, the sea of glass, the mighty book, the new song, all speak another world of higher commanding order. To believe that just exactly these things are to be seen and heard, or have been seen and heard, in this world or any other, is neither vital nor necessary. They simply tell the spiritual realities they stand for are on hand, and will never pass. That God is here with us, his name Immanuel, is the delightful inescapable thing. Though we touch but the hem of his garment, we are at peace. The particular games of the kindergarten we are glad to forget with maturing years. Whatever was the lesson, the veritable fact, we grapple to with hooks of steel, though grown as wise as Solomon. No one knows when any true thing may become significant. Odds and ends not rarely save lives, and fortunes, and the future. The Apocalypse assuredly often seems odds and ends at our human stage of learning. It is as assuredly another chapter of the Posthumous Gospel of Jesus, the gospel of our God.

Christian scholarship has never failed to be impressed with the unshaken sense of the

supernatural Jesus in the apostle Paul. Consenting to the death of Stephen, breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, waxing exceeding mad against anything Christian, he became a veritable pillar of the faith. He never wearied in insisting that he had seen the Lord, the Son of God, not only on the Damascus road, but repeatedly. "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man, for I neither received it of man, nor was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." "The things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not." "Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me."

It is not too much to say that the whole ministry of Paul is of the Posthumous Gospel of his Lord. To be his bond slave was more than rhetoric with him. Though as one born out of due time, he had the same full message of all the other apostles. We get the gospel of Jesus from the story of Saul of Tarsus as assuredly and authoritatively as from Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The earth was getting able to bear, and it had.

The saying of Jesus that he would build his church very plainly indicates that it also is of

the Posthumous Gospel. In plain words, the church is not a product but a process. The mighty Master Builder is daily at its finishing. The common supposition that did we know exactly what the situation was in New Testament times, we would have our model is hardly the case. We would assume no later development, would antagonize or nullify the foundations laid. We may also assume that all future buildings are to be frankly on these foundations. Beyond that, the hand we trust for what is written, may be trusted for all that is to come. No one doubts the great missionary activities are the will of the Master Builder. The Sunday school is no interloper. The Young Men's Christian Association, The Woman's Christian Temperance Union, The Salvation Army, and like projections, are not outside but of the church. It is likely that much good breath and time have been wasted in bewailing denominationalism. Some of these various units may have been born of folly. Many of them are distinctly of the Lord. As things appear, variety is of the divine order of the world, and why should the Church of God be an exception? The pyramids of Egypt were the outcome of an architect's plan, and have stood complete for centuries. Any change was disintegration and decay. Except for their age

and massiveness their glory is of the dead. They are tombs. Such is not the Church of God. It is forever new as being forever in construction. Its glory is to come. It does not shrine the dead. It is speech of Jesus the Son of God, a section of his Posthumous Gospel.

Who can doubt a unified Bible is of the Posthumous Gospel of Jesus? It surely did not reach the earth till Jesus was dead. It carries his message. It is hard to conceive any reason for delay in its arrival than that men were not ready for it. There is no louder, sweeter voice under the sun, now that it is here. If a guiding into all truth is the horoscope of the race, the unified Bible must have and hold its place, as of the deathless gospel of our Lord. Though men are not yet ready to bear its message, they do bear its presence, and that interprets its coming. It is of the gospel of Jesus after he was dead. It is of the many things he could not say while living.

A true perspective of the whole Bible problem is, from its immensity, concretely impossible. Vastly more souls now in heaven never saw the Bible than any other kind or sort. It is a rarity or novelty after fifteen centuries to the great majority of men on earth. With those to whom it is handy it is a *terra incognita* beyond anything else. The Christian Church was

securely anchored in the harbor of the world's heart without it. It is a solvent of earthly ills beyond anything other when honestly applied. The New-Testament story was enacted and reported almost entirely under help only of the Old Testament.

The printed Bible is but beginning its career. Two thousand years knew little other Word of God but a written Word of God. The most utterly divergent cults and theologies base themselves upon the same Bible. It is the most popular and the most neglected volume under the sun. It is the despair and hope of the human race. Similar things might be truly said well-nigh at will. We understand why it waited till it might be borne. It is borne but poorly now. In any absolute sense a gospel of God will forever be beyond its bearing.

Broadly interpreted, the progress of the human race may be written in that happily prevalent word "democracy." The rule of the people is the destiny of the planet. We can see no sufficient reason for the earth but its inhabitants. It may not be capable of proof, but a universe for anything other than men, or similar intelligences, is nowhere on the horizon. At any rate, neither angels nor devils have ever been other than transients under the sun, while men are forever at home. We may infer and

assume the future from the past. Culture and discipline have been the especial affair of humanity. The call of the wild is never silenced but at the will of man. A month's vacation and the dust has gathered in a distinct layer in the most fleckless room. The gravedigger has been filling in. The white soul made in the image of God was set at gardening, dressing, and keeping what would not keep itself. Eden is a wilderness where men do not come by. Wealth is unknown except of men. The squirrel gathers his store for winter, not to have and to hold. Only men are artists or inventors. Only men fight any considerable conscious battle with mortality. Only men contend with ignorance, poverty, discontent, or sin. War, slavery, dissipation, greed, cruelty, and lust have been the evil monopoly of man, and their overthrow his strife. The earth is the home of its citizens. Kings, oppressors, autocrats, tyrants, the proud and selfish, drift to the rear in the onward march of men.

What may all this be but that neighborhood is the will of God and the true genius of the race? No teacher of men ever led his fellows to this light like Jesus of Nazareth. Could the earth have borne it, an Emancipation Proclamation would not have waited for Abraham Lincoln. When slavery dies it must stay dead.

Sober men have not been few in all the ages. A sober world must keep its feet forever. Comfort and quiet are rights of the race. For the race to get and keep them the struggle must be more than overnight. The only utter safety under the sun is holiness, and holiness is never bought, nor hired, nor inherited, nor found. Holiness is dug and fought for. The fall of one holy pair deflected long ages. The fall of a holy world would be irreparable. To save from sin takes more than fiat. A heaven of the unwilling is no heaven. The Saviour of men saves no more slowly than he must. He has many things to say, but will not risk their waste.

As men may bear them he will speak. His Holy Spirit will guide into all truth, as all truth will bring forth fruit. Every sure and solid step the earth takes forward is of the gospel of Jesus after he was dead. It is a saying that finally the earth can bear. It is of the Posthumous Gospel.

The story of the ages is written black with gospels that are not gospels. Jewish disciples of Jesus could see the future only in making their Master a King. With less than twenty centuries making kings disreputable, to whom would the earth now say its prayers? An apostle drew his sword and cut, and crippled, and shed blood, that the preaching might not be

hindered. With the round world sure there is no future to sharp edges, ashamed of its crusades and inquisitions, proud of its Washington disarmament, a Master of Swords would have small standing. The Jesus who cures where other men cut is still here. The good people who set the preacher above the prince did it at their prayers. The plight of the Holy Father is not encouraging. The Jesus of Rome is having trouble at being the Jesus of a world. The utterly certain saints who would have Israel master at Jerusalem have been in mourning long centuries. Had Jesus joined their company, he would have shared their grief.

Of exactly the same sort is the modern gazing into heaven for a Lord that can be seen. The processes of preaching and faith take too much patience and disappointment. Salvation must be made compelling. Had religion by edict been wise in any age, it was surely folly to wait at all. The ways of God with men cannot be justified if he has done less than his most and best at any moment. All fault must be with the faulty. That as men can bear they are given the truth, is the outer edge of all Omnipotence. To look and linger and mourn for more is to impeach the wisdom of the Wise. The Son of God did not trust his gospel of three short years to save the ages. He did

consider that with his gospel after he was dead it would be invincible. The world is poor that it has not always remembered the Posthumous Gospel.

BLUE MONDAY

The gospel of Jesus did not end when he was dead. There were many things the world could not yet bear.

The religion of Jesus to many is a religion of memory. To other millions it is a religion of a hope. It is no religion at all if not a religion of to-day.

It is a poor bargain to trade an ever-living Christ for a Christ to come. The Sermon on the Mount is famous. The Sermon of the Upper Room is prophetic. The Sermon of the Holy Spirit is immortal.

The accent of the last half century on the terminology of the Holy Spirit brought no new thing whatever. It simply deepened, widened, flew the gospel of God, which is the gospel of the Holy Spirit.

The particular games of the kindergarten we forget with maturing years. Their lessons we grapple to with hooks of steel.

No man knows when any true thing will become significant. Lives and fortunes and the future are at the mercy of odds and ends.

The Church of God was never a product but a process. To complain till one sees how it turns out is to be nearsighted.

The Bible is the most popular and the most neglected volume under the sun. It is the despair and the hope of the human race.

There is no sufficient reason for the planet except its citizens. It is prey to the call of the wild.

Every sure and solid step the earth takes onward is of the gospel of Jesus after he was dead.

CHAPTER XX

OVER THE BORDER

A MINISTER dumb as to human destiny is waste of room. A deifying of the passing day, a swift decay of evangelism, a peril to all Christendom is in a tentative hold on the last things. Hope and Fear bowed out of human thinking leave a chasm vast and ominous. The vogue and magic of the Nazarene are much that he has words to say of the long To-morrow. Men suspect that the Bible is the voice of God; that it is a message of other worlds. Do we pray, it is to the Father in heaven. Called to be citizens, it is in a kingdom of heaven. The righteous man is heir of a life eternal. He that works iniquity goes away into an outer darkness. Things that offend are cast into a furnace of fire. "And the ruin of that house was great." In the shadows and the light, mortals are made to know that dying they live again. Mighty contingencies beyond the grave are integral elements of all revealed religion. The prophet doubtful of a far-flung future may be no longer prophet.

In each and every circumstance where human destiny is unfolded in the Holy Scriptures,

some larger vision explaining its advent will appear. Any full survey is discouraged by their wealth and wide extent. Assuming that in nothing vital do these unmated records disagree, we select among them the tale of the rich man and the beggar as our worthy guide to the purpose in hand. It will be found at once suggestive and sufficient.

Our evident presupposition that men are immortal, and, even if desirable, never cease to live, is at the door of this significant story. The beggar carried off by angels might well have thought that he was only beginning to live. The rich man was never so alive as when he was dead. That after death men live, tragically, gloriously, live, is at once the terror and the triumph of the tale. It is the more startling that, aside from the ancient accepted teaching, there is no concept so scripturally plausible as that the determinedly wicked finally cease to be. That the man of faith comes to an everlasting life has no more thinkable antithesis than a cessation of life an everlasting death. A day that burns as an oven, that finds the proud as stubble, that leaves them neither root nor branch, sounds exactly like the thing it says. When the righteous scarcely are saved, where indeed might the sinner and the ungodly appear?

Nevertheless, if the Scriptures are to be interpreted as a whole, and consistently, there is no apparent escape from the old-time belief that righteous and wicked alike live forever, whether happy or despairing. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life." "And I saw the dead, both small and great, stand before God." The passages seeming to say extinction cannot stand against the multitude that declare, with any character, men live, and die, and live again, forever. Destruction and ruin are the more terrible that they do not kill. It is the pitiableness of nervous collapse, insomnia, and kindred ailments, that one does not escape from himself. The rich man could not get away from the rich man. Under all bludgeoning, he was there. The worm died not and the fire was not quenched. As it is the manifest joy of the Bible heaven, so a manifest horror of the Bible hell is continuity. That hell is bearable is an unbearable thing about hell. There is neither suicide nor annihilation for the lost. In heaven they go out no more forever.

Neither the Bible heaven nor the Bible hell

is a matter of locality. As place is of all things finite, they have a place, but place is not of their making. Not where but what is the key of destiny. The rich man was in Hades, which is the world of spirits, whether good or bad. It was his torment, and not his hell, that was of moment. For a bad man there is always probably a worse hell than any hell he gets into, and that hell is heaven. Both the rich man and the beggar were in touch with three worlds; where they had been, where they were, and where they could look. But location was not of the essential. The map is negligible in the world of the dead. The Bible heaven and hell alike are intrinsic. Either might be anywhere.

Neither heaven nor hell is a physical matter. The physical rich man and the physical beggar were in their graves. The burning flame, the parching tongue, the cry for water, were of a soul in torment. The comfort of Lazarus was comfort of soul. The physical but garments the soul. One can live with the house of this tabernacle, with the building of God, or with neither, as to the Bible. The frequent provincial waste of words as to a literal lake of fire might all be spared. The Christian might leave a sensuous heaven to the Turk. The rich man was in torment, with no body to burn

or shrivel. Lazarus was comfortable with his body underground. While in the body we may use terms of the body in reaching an understanding, but to reach farther is to overreach. The resurrected body is a spiritual body, and has, doubtless, joys or troubles of its own beyond all imagining. A common experience under the sun is to outgrow ourselves. Heaven will be unspeakably more precious than any earth terms have made it. Hell will be a sinking below all earlier definitions. Immortal souls soon travel to terminologies of their own. One day it will be common usage to say that, as to its earthly home, a soul has a body rather than a body has a soul. Another day it will be well-nigh entirely true that man is a soul.

Bible destiny is a reign of the right. Good things and evil things, comfort and torment, are no longer so sadly tangled as in the life we know most about. A first impression made on convicts in the penitentiary is that they are now in a world where one does not trifle with law. "Good behavior," behind the bars, is good behavior. It is good behavior where ill behavior finds no patience. In our ordinary world consideration fills so large a place we see but little real justice. Indeed, so finite is mundane life, real justice is probably impossible. The last thing one would ask with open

eyes, this side the grave, is his rights. Beyond the grave one's rights are his life. The rich man cannot be comfortable in hell without ill effect on the beggar. With the beggar among dogs, it might be done, but the beggar among angels is another matter. Should one consider how much of his life on earth is of his earning, he would get a notion of the differences in heaven and hell. The spoiled child of the dust is there grown to a stature where he may bear the regnancy of right, and reap what he has sown. It is a world he never knew. If it is not glorious, it is pitiful and terrible. The Bible destiny for men is a reign of the right. We sing of heaven as a land of the leal.

We are not largely informed, but heaven and hell alike are somewhat in their restrictions. One cannot do some things in heaven. There are more he cannot do in hell. Between them is a great gulf fixed. Familiar with the finite, as we grow to be on earth, at home with the shut in and the shut out, it abides with us when we fly away. Content or otherwise, we stay. "He which is filthy, let him be filthy still." "He that is righteous, let him be righteous still." If in the earth nothing is so unchangeable as change, the country where we journey will be a wonderland.

The Bible hell is a prayerless land. In heaven

we shall almost discover prayer. The rich man prayed in hell. He prayed three times. Not one prayer was answered. The soul in hell is sane after a fashion probably unknown on earth. When one has learned the law of the place, he will no longer, automatically, blindly, crazily, or despairingly pray. The Bible hell is a prayerless land. There is no other such a prison. One lives forever to himself. While he lived his God was self. He is simply allowed his God. The rich man's wealth, and purple, and fine linen, and sumptuous fare, and abounding health, had been his life. He had been sure he could serve both God and Mammon. To be covetous was the way of his world. Why live at all if one could not shine before his neighbors? Why should one be tied to a wife did he want another woman worse? Divorce has been a prerogative with the worldly through long ages. Self all the way has been the end of the argument. Now that he will forget self and pray, he finds he must content himself with self. The Bible hell is a prayerless land. With all hindrances left behind, the very air of heaven must be prayer. No longer much a way to get things, its ancient worth, communion with God, comes into its own. For the convert of the cross to be in heaven with Jesus was quite enough. "And

Enoch walked with God: and was not; for God took him." Good terms with God is heaven enough as it is enough for earth. It will be nothing strange to find, as in old Jerusalem, that the Father's house is a house of prayer.

The Bible hell is a land of discomfort. Comfort is enough for heaven. A great theologian, Dr. Miner Raymond, was once accused of fashioning a doctrine of a tolerable hell. He said what he cared more about was a tolerable God. With all credit given to the mercy and love of God, the hard cold fact remains that the Bible hell is nowhere written as tolerable or comfortable. Its citizens call it torment. The soul is sick within itself, sick with the world it lives in, sick that it cannot sink, sick that it cannot go, sick that it cannot keep away its best beloved. Every thinkable quiet is a door to trouble. A sip of cold water will not be denied. It is denied. Could one hate somebody, it would help. But the difficulty is the great gulf fixed, not that all heaven would not be glad to come. If comfort may not be brought, one may go after it. Not so, for they that would come out must stay. There is no comfort in the universe save outside of hell, and the great gulf is fixed. Neither may heaven help the earth where hell is at interest. One who will not hear Moses and the prophets has no

ear for any world. God is forever doing his final best in every world of his dominion. Anything other would be an echo, shadow, dream of something that was better. The Bible hell is the last word in misery. Its very shadows fail of night.

The Bible hell is as needless as it is deserved. Moses and the prophets were the whole wealth of God to shut one door and open wide another. The steward has only to be faithful in all as he is in some. A beggar gone to the dogs can still keep out of hell. One takes more trouble to get to hell than anywhere else; it is an utterly idiotic journey. One can get on with almost any sort of a wife but one, as to the Bible itself. The Pharisee was under no compulsion to a divorce, to be covetous, or to be proud. That the lost find no one to blame but themselves is of their despair. The just made perfect enjoy their heaven as being just.

The Bible hell is the death of hope as heaven is its fruition. Every wish the rich man had was folly. Henceforth he will suspect and dread all wishes will be folly. There is forever nothing new he will not rather miss. There is probably under heaven or among men no sweeter joy than a bright to-morrow, and hell is a hopeless land, utterly strange and fearsome. One would smile delirious welcome to a scorch-

ing flame. A soul with care no longer for a future, unexpectant, stale, is a supreme horror of all language and all worlds.

Perhaps no single concept is more nearly true than that either hell or heaven is the thing one is. The rich man and the beggar were both Jews. Racial distinctions do not run beyond the veil. Lazarus, Dives, Abraham, the angels find themselves at a common interest. As in sleep, shipwreck, famine, there is no caste when men are dead. Political, cultural, economic bars, all are down. The beggar was not in heaven that he was poor. The rich man was not in hell that he was rich. Abraham was rich. Not every beggar may consort with angels. This particular beggar carries his heaven with him. The sort of rich man he had been was the rich man's hell beyond all else. Covetous, proud, self-indulgent, sensual, there was no table where he might sit, no room in all his world where the manner of man he was might feel at home. His hell was under his purple robe. Does one not have a heaven in his soul there is no heaven to be found. As in nothing other, the thing we are is our world, in any world.

Did one say in a word that heaven is the negative of the lost world, he would say the truth, but probably not at all the whole truth. Dis-

comfort gives way to comfort, and despair to hope. The rule of right is a felicity rather than a penalty. Such restrictions as even good men still may need, will be hailed as benedictions. Prayer will be native air. Service will be joy. The company of the sad and hateful will be escaped for that of saints and angels. Rather than no welcome future it will seem as if life were all To-morrow. With the immortal dreamer, the vision is a lonely weariness with the dust and night. "And when I saw, I wished myself among them."

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